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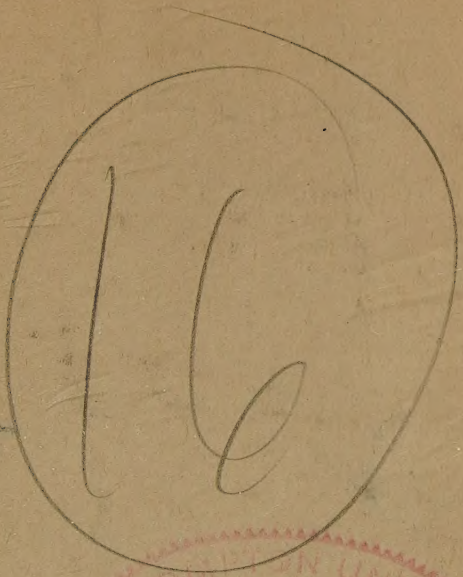

UNION
HIGH SCHOOL

ENGLISH POETRY

ITS PRINCIPLES AND PROGRESS

WITH REPRESENTATIVE MASTERPIECES
FROM 1390 TO 1917 AND
WITH NOTES

BY

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886

COMPTON

NEW EDITION
REVISED AND ENLARGED

1920

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PREFACE

THE purpose of this book is first and foremost to inspire young people with a love of poetry. In preparing this revised and enlarged edition we have aimed to set before pupils in our high schools not merely poems that will yield enjoyment after they have been studied, but poems that one cannot help enjoying on first acquaintance.

In order that the book may be of value for the entire high school course we have been at particular pains to include a large number of poems suitable for pupils of the first and second years. With these years especially in mind, more than one half of the material has been selected. With the more advanced pupils in mind, we have added to the poems usually prescribed as requirements for entrance to college a large number worthy on their own account, and all the more likely to promote a love of poetry because they are not staled by custom.

In the choice of materials we have had the kind assistance of over a hundred experienced and successful high school teachers of English. Carefully weighing their recommendations, we have omitted from our former list three or four poems easily procurable elsewhere, and have included some fifty poets not represented before and more than a hundred and fifty additional poems. Of the newly inserted poets and poems, about half supplement the material illustrative of the periods covered in the former editions of the book, which closed with Matthew Arnold. The poets of more recent periods, some twenty-seven, and poems, some eighty in all, no less cordially approved by our consulting committee, have been added in order that pupils may not rest in the conviction that English poetry ceased with Tennyson, Browning, and Arnold. The tale thus resumed with Meredith, Rossetti, Morris, and

Swinburne, and carried down to the present day, will, we are confident, be of rare and inspiring interest and value to teachers and pupils alike. In this latter effort our labors have been lightened by the generous coöperation of several of the most representative contemporary poets.

We have, in general, adhered to the plan of the former book. The design is to provide within the covers of one volume what is usually set forth in three volumes: (1) an introduction to the Principles of Poetry; (2) a survey of the Progress of English Poetry by its periods, together with critical sketches of the lives and works of the poets chosen as representative; (3) as much as possible of the poetry commonly read in preparation for entrance to American universities, and such other poems as are illustrative of successive literary periods and adapted to the requirements of an introductory course in English masterpieces; (4) such notes as will aid the pupil in his study of the poems and increase his ability to appreciate and understand poetry not thus annotated.

For our former prefatory essay on the principles of poetry, intended not primarily for use in class but for "teachers, to to be retailed to younger pupils as occasion offers and discretion dictates," we have substituted here a distinctively elementary Introduction to the Study of Poetry. This Introduction covers only such topics as are essential to the information of high school pupils. It aims to present the material as briefly and simply as possible, but still with something of the detail befitting a subject of wide scope, something of the explanation required by pupils unfamiliar with the study, and something of the literary sympathy and delight that cannot be conveyed in a categorical and dry-as-dust statement. If the student is encouraged to make constant reference to the illustrative poems mentioned in the Introduction, he will learn to apply the principles and will derive keener enjoyment from poetry better understood. At the request of teachers the more comprehensive Principles of Poetry mentioned above will presently be republished in enlarged and independent form. It may, meanwhile, be consulted in the earlier editions of this book.

The chapters on the Progress of English Poetry aim to focus in one study the theory and history of the subject. They introduce each literary period and the biographies of the respective authors with a more general account of the characteristics and tendencies of the age. In the special criticism of the poems by which each author is represented (whether in the text or the notes) consideration has been given not only to his personal and historical conditions but to the relation of his work to poetic principles and the development of national literature. It will naturally be found advisable when dealing with younger pupils to read the poems in order of simplicity, as outlined below. But even so, the reading of the poet's biography should precede the reading of his poems, and in brief and appropriate fashion the characteristics of the period should be indicated by the teacher. Toward the end of the course — say, during the last term of the senior year — the historical and biographical sections should be read in review and supplemented by the study of some general school history of English literature.

Dramas, epics, and metrical romances (such as those of Scott) have not been included in this volume simply because their length is prohibitive. The same considerations have compelled us to content ourselves with only two of the *Idylls of the King*. *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, although the work of an American, has been carried over from the former edition at the request of teachers and for the convenience of students: the theme and treatment of the poem are such that it readily finds a place beside other narratives of chivalry here presented; it furnishes, moreover, an excellent opportunity for comparison of a noble American production with poems of similar nature by English writers. One other American poem is included and one poem by a Canadian, — Seeger's *I Have a Rendezvous with Death* and McCrae's *In Flanders Fields*. They could not be omitted from any collection of poems of the World War. From *The Faerie Queene*, *Paradise Lost*, *Childe Harold*, *In Memoriam*, *Dauber*, and two or three other poems too long for inclusion as wholes, we have presented excerpts. The rest of our poetic specimens are printed in their integrity.

In order to preserve their historical flavor we should have preferred to retain the archaic spelling of the older poets, but at the instance of many excellent teachers, who are of the opinion that such practice detracts from the pupil's appreciation of the poetry, we have refrained. The spelling has been uniformly modernized, except in the case of Chaucer. He wrote nearly two centuries before any of the other poets represented, and his orthography is part of the historical characteristic of a distant age and is essential to the charm of his poems. With Burns the Ayrshire dialect has, of course, been preserved, and for much the same reason; he would not be Burns without it.

In the notes at the end of the volume the attempt has been made to keep in mind a few definite considerations. First, *Notes are for the student and should be strictly practical.* Since they will, for the most part, be used by young people, they have been made on the basis of actual experience in the classroom. They aim to give nothing but what the student can use; to leave out all that will not directly aid him in understanding and appreciating the poem. Second, *Notes should clear up difficulties.* Though inspiration and enjoyment are the chief ends of poetry, they can be attained only if the reader understand the thought of the poet and his art, and, therefore, the words by which these are conveyed. Third, *Notes should not tell the student what he may reasonably be expected to find out for himself.* Explanations are given only when they cannot with readiness and economy be obtained from the ordinary books of reference. There should be within the reach of every pupil at least the following manuals: an English dictionary, such as Webster's *International*, *The New Standard*, or *The Century*, or a good abridgment for his own desk, such as Webster's *Academic;* a dictionary of classical names and myths, or some complete manual of mythology, such as Gayley's *Classic Myths in English Literature;* a Bible, if possible with a concordance; and a good History of English Literature with which to supplement the outline given in this book. The information easily to be found in these the editors have tried not to duplicate here. Fourth, *Notes should be adapted to the requirements of pupil and poem.* Chaucer and Burns, with

their textual peculiarities, need notes entirely different from Milton and Pope with their allusive character, or Wordsworth and Browning with their subtlety of thought. The pupil of lower grade requires a kind of help different from that demanded by his seniors. Some of the simpler poems here have accordingly been annotated, not with few notes because they are simple, but with ample notes because presumably the pupil who will study them is young. Fifth, *Notes should be suggestive.* The inability to realize what he ought to see in a poem, or to recognize what it really contains, is probably the chief drawback with the immature reader. The editors, therefore, offer no apology for the directive questions and suggestions of the notes. It is hoped that they may prove of real advantage to pupil and teacher. Sixth, *Notes are valuable only as a means to an end,* — that the reader may gain the greatest possible pleasure and inspiration from the poems themselves. In most cases he should endeavor to get all he can from the text before resorting to the notes at all.

The order in which these poems are studied will vary with the maturity of the student and the judgment of the teacher. Pupils of the third and fourth years and general readers will not infrequently take histories and texts in their chronological order. But for pupils of the first and second years of the high school course poems will naturally be selected with an eye to their simplicity and suitability of appeal. The following list of authors, arranged not in order of preference but chronologically, will direct the teacher to over a hundred poems exceptionally adapted to the course of the first two years; and these poems by no means exhaust the possibilities:

Elizabethan lyrists, Cavalier lyrists, Gray, Goldsmith,* Blake,* Burns,* Coleridge, Southey,* Lamb, Hunt,* Byron,* Shelley (*The Cloud*),* Macaulay,* Tennyson (nearly all), Arnold (*The Forsaken Merman*),* Lowell, Morris, Stevenson,* Henley, Kipling (nearly all),* Yeats,* De la Mare,* Masefield, Noyes (nearly all), Stephens (nearly all),* O'Sullivan,* and most of the poets of the World War. From the authors marked with an asterisk, some fifty poems may be drawn that will be both delightful and instructive for pupils of the first year. If

they have read a few of the poems already in the grammar school, they will derive nothing but profit from reviewing them at a maturer age.

Remembering that the purpose of this study is to promote a love of poetry, teachers will encourage their pupils to read widely, as well as carefully. That all may know what good things not included in this book await the reader we have constantly, in the biographies of the poets and in the notes, suggested poems and volumes of poems with which the materials presented here may be supplemented. The more generously school and town libraries are equipped with such books the more generally will good poetry be read, and the more richly will teachers be repaid for their classroom efforts to stimulate an appreciation of what is best in our literature.

The methods of teaching outlined in previous editions of this book are included with similar materials in a bulletin entitled Suggestions for Teachers of English in the Secondary Schools, by C. M. Gayley and C. B. Bradley. The pamphlet may be had on application to the University of California Press, Berkeley.

It remains to acknowledge the courtesy of publishers and authors. The selections from the poetry of Robert Bridges are used by permission of and by arrangement with the Oxford University Press. We are similarly indebted to Doubleday, Page and Company for the selections from the poetry of Rudyard Kipling; to John Lane Company for *Wordsworth's Grave* by Sir William Watson, and for the selections from John Davidson, Stephen Phillips, and Rupert Brooke; to the Houghton Mifflin Company for *We Willed It Not* by John Drinkwater and *Edith Cavell* by Laurence Binyon; to Dodd, Mead and Company, his American publishers, for the selections from Austin Dobson; to Longmans, Green and Company for the selections from Andrew Lang; to William Heinemann for *Lying in the Grass* by Edmund Gosse; to Charles Scribner's Sons for the selections from Robert Louis Stevenson's "Child's Garden of Verses," and *I Have a Rendezvous with Death* from Poems by Alan Seeger; to Henry Holt and Company for the selections from "Peacock Pie" and "The

Listeners" by Walter de la Mare; to Frederick Stokes Company for the selections from Alfred Noyes; to G. P. Putnam's Sons for *In Flanders Fields* by John McCrae; to the *London Times* for *Into Battle* by the Hon. Julian Grenfell; and to The Macmillan Company for the selections from John Masefield and William Butler Yeats, and the selections from "The Hill of Vision" and "The Rocky Road to Dublin" by James Stephens, and for selections from "Battle and Other Poems" by W. W. Gibson. We also take great pleasure in expressing our gratitude to Robert Bridges, Edmund Gosse, Rudyard Kipling, Walter de la Mare, and Alfred Noyes for personal permission to use their poems.

CHARLES MILLS GAYLEY

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
May 10, 1920.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF POETRY[1]

I. LITERATURE IN GENERAL

1. **Literature** may be defined as the product of thought in language committed to permanent form by writing. It is of three kinds: the practical, the artistic, and the creative.

2. **Practical Literature** aims to give information about the actual affairs of life. It communicates facts to our thinking faculty, the understanding. It consists of records, reports, official papers, business correspondence, the news of the day, textbooks, and other publications, historical or scientific, that are intended to disseminate information. Practical literature aims to set the "hard facts" before us as they are, without any coloring of emotion or appeal to the imagination. When the purpose of literature is merely to instruct or to convince by argument, it is a handicraft. The appropriate language of practical literature is prose.

3. **Artistic Literature.** — Literature begins to enter the realm of art just as soon as it stimulates the imagination and stirs feelings of pain and pleasure — especially feelings that are not about our own practical concerns. The literature of history as it is written by Macaulay, with charm of manner and style, with imagination and feeling, is artistic even though its purpose be to instruct and convince. So also are the orations of Burke and Webster and the essays of Matthew Arnold and Lowell and Emerson. They are artistic literature but they are not *creative*. The cause for this is not that they are written in prose, but that they are addressed to the reason, rather than to the imagination and the emotions. Their first aim is to instruct and convince.

4. **Creative Literature.** — When the author aims not at all

[1] The *Principles of Poetry* printed in previous editions of this book will presently be issued in revised and enlarged form.

to instruct or convince but to appeal directly to the imagination of his readers and to the emotions that delight in the ideal — the wonderful, noble, beautiful — he produces Creative Literature: a song, like Burns's *Auld Lang Syne ;* a story, like Mr. Kipling's *Wee Willie Winkie ;* an epic, like Milton's *Paradise Lost ;* a novel, like Thackeray's *Henry Esmond ;* a drama, like *The Tempest.* (1) The subject is no longer some bare fact, but the fact colored by a noble emotion and transfigured by the author's imagination. He has created something new and beautiful. (2) His song or story or drama does not affect our immediate and particular and practical concerns and our selfish emotions; it is his vision of what life means for the hearts of all people always. (3) He tries to awaken in us the imaginings that he had, and by means of those imaginings to arouse in us the emotions that inspired him to create. (4) The style as well as the thought gives exalted pleasure. (5) Creative literature is poetic. The word "poetic" means *creative.* (6) Poetic literature may be written in either prose or verse. Prose and verse are merely ways of arranging words. Of the difference between them and the reason for it we shall speak later. Short stories and novels and dramas in prose are often poetic. But verse is the form best adapted to imaginative and emotional utterance. The highest kind of creative literature, Poetry Proper — lyric, narrative, or dramatic — is written in verse.

II. POETRY PROPER

5. **Poetry**, or Poetry Proper, is a transfiguration of life, an imaginative presentation of it, addressed to our nobler emotions and expressed in language of appropriate rhythmic form, preferably verse.

We read poetry because it gives us delight. It carries us along with the rhythmic swing of its lines, and its words fitly chosen present to the imagination pictures of what is most real and most lasting in human experience. The music of the words and the beauty of the images move our feelings and awaken within us a "passion for the good and fair."

The word "Poetry" means a *creation.* The word "Poet" means a *maker*, a *creator.*

The Subjects of poetry are drawn from nature and human life: whatever man perceives, feels, thinks, wills, or does. Poetry sets before us man's emotions and his moral character, his conceptions and intentions, his aspirations, his ideals, and his deeds; in short, his career and the world in which he moves.

The Activity of the Mind by which poetry transfigures life is the Imagination.

The Means by which poetry conveys to us its transfiguration of life are the Images, or Pictures, created by the imagination, and the Words by which they are expressed.

The Purpose of poetry is to stir our Emotions and assist them to appreciate the meaning of life as it is presented to us in the light of goodness and beauty.

The Form of poetry and its Kinds we shall consider in later sections. Here let us discuss the terms mentioned above.

6. Imagination. — Imagination is (1) the faculty by which the mind embodies an *idea* in a picture or image that we can grasp. It is (2) the faculty that forms images or pictures of *objects* not present to the senses. It is (3) the faculty that constructs the whole song or story to which these pictures of characters and emotions, of scenes and events, contribute.

The poet draws for the construction of his poem from nature and human life, but he does not confine himself to copying the particulars exactly as they are and in their exact order or to reproducing the actual objects as they remain in his memory. (1) He selects the objects or events that he shall use. (2) Some he may imitate in detail. (3) Some he may outline from memory. (4) In general, by his imagination he reshapes his actual experience or invents what might have been experienced, and (5) by his imagination he arranges all to suit the purpose of his lyric or story or drama.

The poet wishes to make us feel. He does not reason with us. He puts thoughts and things into as real and vivid a form as possible so as to appeal to our senses. If he wishes us to appreciate what patriotism is, he does not make a general statement about it or give us a definition of it; he shows us what it is in a series of pictures — perhaps in a picture of a single instance. He sets before us Horatius and his two noble friends keeping

the bridge which the enemy must not cross — or Rome will fall. The Etruscan foe sweeps down upon the Three, jeering as it comes. The Three look the oncoming thousands in the face, give battle, and hold them back just for a brief season manfully. But the Romans have had time to hew the bridge down. As it totters the two friends escape. Rome is saved. Horatius plunges into the yellow Tiber and reaches the home shore, and —

> Still is the story told,
> How well Horatius kept the bridge
> In the brave days of old.

Imagination leaves out everything that does not count. It retains or adds whatever may help us to grasp the *meaning* of an idea or an object and to feel it. It furnishes something more significant and impressive than an actual experience. Imagination is the faculty of spiritual insight as well as of creation. By this insight the poet discovers the essential and lasting passions, hopes, and deeds that are behind all history. He presents or suggests only those that underlie all experience and make it worth while and beautiful. Whether his vision is of an amusing aspect of life or of a serious aspect, it is wisely and sincerely imagined. He sets before us the poetic truth. *Poetic Truth* is not necessarily what has happened but what may have happened, — what is probable and nearer to the meaning of life than most of the things that happen around us in everyday life.

7. Images, Reproduced and Created. — The poet makes use of two kinds of images: (1) those that reproduce actual experience by copying it or by reviving it through memory; (2) those that are created by the poet's imagination. — Memory is a kind of imagination, but it merely *reproduces* what we have experienced. Memory images adorn poetry, but they are not purely creative. Excellent examples of them will be found in the old ballads and in Macaulay's *Horatius* (stanzas VI–VIII). Such images are common to all literature. *Created images* are the distinctive property of poetry. They represent facts or fancies, selected, modified, and transformed by the imagination into something new both in idea and expression. Memory recalls the simple picture of a "day-break." Creative imagination

transforms the "day-break" into "incense-breathing Morn," or "the opening eyelids of the Dawn" — presents it under an aspect of new meaning and beauty. When other literature uses created images it is more or less poetic.

8. **Figures of Poetry.** — Created images, as we have seen, give body and form to thoughts and make what is not present to the senses more real, vivid, and suggestive than the plain fact. They express one condition, object, or action by aid of, or in terms of, another. The devices by means of which the writer places these images or pictures before us are Figures of Poetry. Some of the ways by means of which they convey images to us are:

(1) By expressing one object by aid of its likeness to another, — introducing the resemblance with such a word as "like" or "as." When Burns thought of a certain lovely woman, the image of a rose came to his mind, and he *likened* her to the rose: "My luve is *like* a red, red rose." He was using the figure called *Simile*. (2) By expressing one object in terms of another, or by giving it the attributes of another. If Burns had said, "My luve *is* a red, red rose," he would have been using a figure called *Metaphor*. Shakespeare uses a metaphor when he calls the stars "blessed candles of the night"; so does Keats when he speaks of "Music's golden tongue." (3) By speaking of abstractions or inanimate things as if they had life and form, as "Virtue could see to do what Virtue would By her own radiant light." This is *Personification*. (4) By addressing an absent person or a personified thing or abstraction, for instance, frailty — "Frailty, thy name is woman." This is *Apostrophe*. (5) By speaking of that which is distant, or of the past or future, as if it were before one in presence, as when Byron referring to a work of sculpture says, "I see before me the Gladiator lie." This is *Vision*. (6) By substituting one object for another because the two seem to be closely connected or related physically, as the material is to the thing made out of it, — for instance, "the tinkling *brass*" for *cymbals;* or as the whole is related to its part, or the part to the whole, as "How beautiful are the *feet* of them that preach the gospel of peace"; or as the container is related to the thing contained, and *vice versa*, as

"Costly thy habit as thy *purse* can buy." All of these figures are called *Synecdoche*. (7) By substituting one thought or object for another because they accompany each other in time, as "all autumn" for the fruits of that season; or are related as sign and thing signified, — for instance "gray hairs" for old age; or as cause and effect: "the bright *death*" for the cause of death — the sword. Figures of this kind are called *Metonymy*.

9. **Figures of Speech.** — Figures of poetry must not be confused with figures of speech that are simply devices for forceful expression. In common with other literature and with the language of conversation, poetry makes use of figures of speech, but they are concerned with the sense alone; they do not make use of images. The student will find discussion of them in textbooks of rhetoric. Two classes may be mentioned. (1) Devices of Reasoning. These, such as *hyperbole*, *innuendo*, and *irony*, suggest indirectly the conclusion to which the author desires to lead his reader. *Hyperbole* overstates the fact that the reader is intended to accept. *Innuendo* understates it. *Irony* states or implies the opposite of the fact. (2) Devices of Rhetoric. These are either methods of emotional expression, such as *Iteration* and *Broken Utterance*, or effective arrangements of words within the sentence or paragraph, such as *Antithesis*, *Balance*, *Climax*. — The *Hyperbole*, which is merely an exaggerated statement of a fact or fancy, sometimes becomes poetic by taking on the form of a metaphor. Milton, for instance, uses hyperbole in the form of metaphor when, to describe a thrilling song, he says that its strains "might create a soul under the ribs of death."

10. **Poetic Diction.** — The means by which the poet expresses himself are images and words. (1) His diction may be that of ordinary speech, or it may be polished, or grand. It may be either formal or colloquial. Note the difference between the language and style of Gray's *Elegy* and Milton's *Paradise Lost*, on the one hand, and, on the other, of Kipling's *Mandalay* and of the Sailors in Mr. Masefield's *Dauber*. The diction is determined by the purpose of the author, his manner, his subject, his characters — their custom and their time, — and by the kind of audience to which he appeals. (2) But the language should

be perspicuous even if the thought be profound. (3) Poetry demands words that are vivid, that stir the senses, that are picturesque, that make sounds, sights, colors, tastes, touch, and mental experiences live for the imagination and go home to the feelings. (4) The words are colored with rich associations. Even though familiar they seem to be novel because charged with unexpected meaning. (5) Sometimes, in order to create the appropriate atmosphere, the poet uses words that are old-fashioned, even archaic. (6) Sometimes he employs unusual phrases, and arrangements of words in the sentence and paragraph that are infrequent in prose. (7) Sometimes, to create an impression of swiftness and directness, he uses abbreviated expressions.

All these peculiarities are permissible if suitable to the purpose, the subject, the mood of the poet, the images he would set before us, and the emotions he would arouse.

11. **The Emotions.** — Poetry moves us to sympathy with the emotions of the poet himself or with the careers and emotions of the persons whom his imagination has created. We witness their struggles, triumphs and failures. We feel their loves and hates, their joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, indignations and admirations, laughters and despairs, somewhat as if these were our own. And still while we suffer with their anxieties and sorrows we derive a pleasure from the experience. That pleasure is one of disinterested sympathy. If we were taking active part in a tragic story of real life and were not able to reflect upon it impartially and see into its meaning, we should not have any feeling of imaginative pleasure.

But because we know that every great lyric and epic and drama is wisely *imagined* and therefore presents gladness or woe in the light of beauty, the poem gives us a higher satisfaction than that which comes from making other people's joys and sorrows our own. Arnold's *Requiescat*, Longfellow's *Evangeline*, Tennyson's *Lancelot and Elaine*, Shakespeare's *Othello*, are sad, but they are uplifting, beautiful, and ideal.

12. **The Ideal Emotions.** — The ideal emotions touch our hearts, but they do not move us to exultation or resentment or despair. They are imagined feelings. They are the emotions

that poetry aims to awaken in us; and they give us the pleasure proper to poetry, — the pleasure that comes from feeling deeply and wisely and unselfishly about the meaning of life. And that kind of feeling we can have only when we regard personal joys and sorrows in the light of imagination and realize that they are common to all mankind. Only in that way can we understand the worth and beauty of life.

Of the Ideal Emotions some are born of pain and pity and terror and are grave and saddening, such as the tragic and the pathetic. Some teach us to be humble before the mystery of life, — such as the sense of awe and reverence. Some inspire to noble conduct, — such as the sublime. Still others, such as the comic and the beautiful, help us to realize that life has its brighter side. The ideal emotions give us pleasure even when they have pained us, the highest pleasure that poetry can yield. They all contribute to what is called *Poetic Beauty*. For the beautiful in poetry is not merely that which, like the flower or the lovely face, charms us with its perfection of physical form, or that which, like the gracious and happy life, suggests the beauty of the soul. It is the adequate expression of a wise and imaginative view of what life means and what men feel. There is beauty of the sublime in the terror of the storm and the disaster of the sea. There is beauty in the pride of the rebellious Archangel and in the dungeon horrible and fiery lake to which he falls. There is beauty in the tragic meanness of the Hospital where Life and Death meet, in the struggle and pathos of Dauber's career, in the tombs of Westminster Abbey, in the suffering of poor "Miss 7," in the self-sacrifice of Gunga Din, in the agony of the Dying Gladiator. Poetic beauty, because it utters the deeper and poetic truth, presents life in its fulness and satisfies our passion for what is good and fair.

Mr. Masefield says of one of his tragic heroines — singing in her last hour and in the desolation of grief:

> So triumphing her song of love began,
> Ringing across the meadows like old woe
> Sweetened by poets to the help of man
> Unconquered in eternal overthrow.

The lines are from his *Daffodil Fields*.

13. The Purpose of Poetry; the Ideal. — The purpose of poetry is, as we have seen, not to give us a passing thrill of delight. It is to present "by means of the imagination noble grounds for noble emotions." It shows us the meaning of life; it aims to express or suggest ideals for life.

The Ideal is an idea, but not an ordinary idea or thought. It is a thought of something more real than actual experience. (1) It is a thought of what would be the best possible state of things, — a thought, for instance, of truth or unselfishness or virtue or love or beauty in its *perfection*. (2) It is the thought of a perfection that satisfies both our reason and our feelings. (3) It is also the embodiment of such a thought in form that appeals to our senses, our emotions, our will. (4) It is a thought that fires our imagination and fills us with enthusiasm. We feel that the perfection we have imagined is not only possible but may be made real and enduring. (5) It is something actual in our lives; it is a standard to strive for and imitate.

The ideal is necessary to human existence. It inspires us to make the best of ourselves and of a world in which truth and worth are often distorted, and where selfish and petty interests would lead us astray. It is a star by which to shape our course. Poetry aims to show in the light of beauty what is true and what is worth while. It presents ideals that inspire and satisfy our passion for what is good and fair.

III. THE FORM OF POETRY; RHYTHM AND VERSE

14. Rhythm. — When we read poetry aloud we take pleasure in the ease with which the sounds flow from our lips. We have this sense of flowing along because the words are so arranged that we cannot help emphasizing certain syllables at regular intervals. And the regular recurrence of this emphasis or accent delights the ear. In such a stanza as,

> This seraph-band, each waved his hand;
> It was a heavenly sight!
> They stood as signals to the land,
> Each one a lovely light, —

it is not necessary to mark the important syllables so that we may

know where to throw the emphasis. But if we should mark them thus:

This séraph-bánd, each wáved his hánd,

we would notice that every other syllable has a natural accent. This regular recurrence of a beat, or stress, or accent in poetry (or in music) is called *Rhythm*.

Rhythm is an instinctive tendency, a law of the mind, by which we regulate the movement of language in accordance with the accents of the words. (1) The word *rhythm* means "a flowing." (2) In prose there is frequently a rhythmic flow but the stresses or accents do not recur with regularity. (3) In verse — the form of arranging words that is preferred by poetry — the rhythm gives us greater pleasure because it satisfies our natural desire for regularity. It is natural for us to "keep step," to "beat time." (4) Noises "get on our nerves." If they are prolonged they weary us. If they are jerky they irritate us. They have no law and therefore seem to have no reason for existence, no meaning. Every series of sounds that we hear we try to reduce to order, to some regular recurrence of beat. (5) We arrange the sounds in groups each with its emphatic beat in the same place, following one after the other like ripples on a stream. Into the maddening *clack*, *clack*, *clack* of the railway train as it bumps over the ties we cannot help reading some kind of rhythm — some *clĭckety-clăck*, *clĭckety-clăck*. As soon as we have done so, the noise, whether monotonous or jerky, no longer disturbs us. (6) When we arrange word sounds in such a way that the syllables as they follow one after another form little rhythmical groups, each of the same length and each with its accented syllable in the same place, we are putting them into verse.

15. Verse and Prose. — Verse and prose are two forms in which language may be arranged. Unpoetic thoughts are sometimes expressed in verse, and poetry is sometimes expressed in prose. (1) But verse is the more appropriate form for the language of poetry, not only because verse gives pleasure by following the *law* of rhythm but because it selects the particular *kind* of rhythm best adapted to the imagination and emotion

that the language aims to convey. (2) Prose, on the other hand, is the more appropriate form for the language of practical and scientific thought because such language aims not to give pleasure but information. Prose concerns itself first and foremost not with the emotions but with the understanding. The word *prose* means "forthright," "direct," "straight on."

IV. VERSE: FOOT AND METRE

16. Definitions. — The unit of rhythm in English poetry is the foot. (1) The *Foot* is the smallest group of accented and unaccented syllables regularly recurring in a poem. Upon the kind of foot employed depends the rhythm of the poem. (2) *Metre*, which means "measure," regulates the number of feet in each line. Each line is called a verse. (3) *Verse* means "a turning." When a verse ends, there is a slight pause and the rhythm turns and begins another verse. The verse is the chief *structural* unit in a poem. (4) The word "verse," as we have seen, is used also in a general sense to indicate any kind of metrical composition; that is, anything that is *not* prose. (5) In *prose* the line may be as long as the page is broad and there is no pause except for punctuation till we reach the end of the sentence. In prose the sentence is the chief *structural* unit.

17. Feet. — Feet in English verse are of two, three, or four syllables. (1) In each foot only one syllable is accented. (2) The unaccented syllables rise toward the accent, or stress, or they fall away from it. (3) In the words "infórm," "indistínct," the rhythm of the foot ascends to the accent. In the words, "flóating," "ténderly," the rhythm descends from the accent. (4) The stress is indicated, as above, by the ordinary sign for an accent (′). The lack of stress may be indicated by the breve (˘), a sign for a short, or light, syllable. Vertical lines are used to mark off the feet.

The feet most commonly used in English verse are as follows:

Ascending Rhythm	*Descending Rhythm*
Iambus (˘ ′) ĭnfórm	Trochee (′ ˘) flóatĭng
Anapæst (˘ ˘ ′) ĭndĭstínct	Dactyl (′ ˘ ˘) téndĕrlĭ
	Pæon (′ ˘ ˘ ˘) éxquĭsĭtelў

Two unusual feet are the Spondee and the Pyrrhic. The spondee consists of two long syllables (——) as in "empire." But as we naturally accent the first syllable of "émpire" the spondee becomes a trochee (′ ∪). Some spondees may be read as iambs; for instance, "dīlāte." The pyrrhic consists of two short syllables (∪ ∪); but since we naturally place an accent on one of the syllables, the pyrrhic becomes an iamb (∪ ′) or a trochee (′ ∪).

18. Metres. — Metres are of as many kinds as there are feet in the line, or verse. (1) A verse of one foot is called monometer, — that is, one-measure; a verse of two feet is called dimeter; of three, trimeter; of four, tetrameter; of five, pentameter; of six, hexameter; of seven, heptameter; of eight, octameter. (2) The name of the metre is generally qualified by an adjective indicating the *kind* of foot used in the line. A verse consisting of one foot, such as "bĕwáre," would be monometer, but since "beware" is an iamb, the metre is known as *iambic* monometer. A verse consisting of the word "fóllў" would be *trochaic* monometer. (3) The division of verses into feet is called *Scansion*.

The following are examples of *iambic metres* in their simplest form:

With rav|ished ears (iambic dimeter).
Grow old | along | with me (iambic trimeter).
Now strike | the gol | den lyre | again (iambic tetrameter).
So all | day long | the noise | of bat | tle rolled (iambic pentameter).
Thou art | unseen | but yet | I hear | thy shrill | delight (iambic hexameter).
Now glo | ry to | the Lord | of Hosts | from whom | all glo | ries are (iambic heptameter).

The octameter is merely a doubled tetrameter verse.

The metres illustrated above are of Ascending Rhythm. The following are examples of metres that use the other foot of ascending rhythm — the *anapæst* (∪∪ ′):

As I ride|as I ride (anapæstic dimeter).
And the sound | of a voice | that is still (anapæstic trimeter).
There's a bliss | beyond all | that the min | strel has told (anapæstic tetrameter).

Examples of metres made of feet of Descending Rhythm, viz., the *trochee*, *dactyl*, and *pæon*, are:

Rich the | treasure (trochaic dimeter).
Where the | apple | reddens (trochaic trimeter).
Do not | shoot me | Hia | watha (trochaic tetrameter).
This is the | forest pri | meval but | where are the | hearts that be | neath it (dactylic hexameter; last foot a trochee).
Calling to the | angels and the | souls in their de | gree (pæonic tetrameter; last foot incomplete).

Notice that each of the pæons in the last verse might be read as two trochees (´⏑´⏑) with but a slight accent on the third syllable; for instance "cálling | tó thĕ." But to divide pæons in that way would destroy the rapidity of the rhythm. Frequent use of the pæonic metres is made by Mr. Kipling. Examples of the pæonic tetrameter will be found in Mr. Noyes's *The Barrel-Organ*.

For purposes of brevity iambic monometer may be indicated by the letters *xa*; *x* standing for an unaccented syllable, *a* for an accented. Anapæstic monometer would be *xxa*. Trochaic monometer would be *ax*; dactylic, *axx*; pæonic, *axxx*. For lines of more than one foot, prefix a figure showing the number of feet. Thus, iambic pentameter would be *5xa*; dactylic dimeter, *2axx*; etc.

19. **Metres of Special Interest.** — The *iambic pentameter* plays a very important part in English verse. When rhymed in couplets it is called *heroic verse*. This verse is used in many epics and dramas, and in many narrative poems — such as Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* — and in mock-heroic poems, such as Pope's *Rape of the Lock*:

> What dire | offence | from am' | rous caus | es springs,
> What mighty quarrels rise from trivial things.

When unrhymed the iambic pentameter is called *Blank Verse*. That is the verse used in Shakespeare's plays, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*:

> So all day long the noise of battle rolled
> Among the mountains by the winter sea.

Blank verse is the standard metre for themes of gravity and magnitude.

Another interesting metre is the *iambic hexameter*, or *senarius*, now usually called the *Alexandrine*. It runs thus:

Fierce wars and faithful loves shall moralize my strain.

Spenser used it as the concluding line of what is named after him, the Spenserian stanza. It lends an air of sonority and finality to the eight pentameter verses that precede it in the stanza.

A still more interesting metre is the *dactylic hexameter*. It is employed by Longfellow in *Evangeline*. It consists in English of five dactyls and a final trochee. But for any of the first four dactyls a trochee may be substituted:

Over the | pallid | sea and the | silvery | mist of the | meadows.

20. How Metres are Varied. — In the examples of metres given above, usually the same foot continues through the line. It is well for one who is beginning to write verse to use one kind of foot for the whole poem. The effect of such regularity is, however, sometimes monotonous. The experienced poet knows how to vary the effect while still preserving the fundamental character of the foot and metre. He substitutes one foot for another; he introduces a pause; he varies the accent of the foot; he varies the number of syllables in the line.

1. *Substitutions*. Feet of the same rhythmic movement are frequently substituted one for the other. Since the iamb and the anapæst are both of ascending rhythm an anapæst may be used in an iambic verse —

For all | averred | *I had killed* | the bird;

or an iamb in an anapæstic verse —

By the truth | of the no | *ble dead.*

Feet of descending rhythm are similarly interchangeable. For instance a dactyl for a trochee —

Under the | hawthorn | in the | dale.

And in a dactylic line —

Fair is our | *lot* — *Oh* | *goodly is our* | heritage,

we find a trochee in the second foot and a pæon in the third.

2. *Variety of Pause.* At the end of every verse the voice naturally makes a very slight pause, even if the pause is not called for by the punctuation. The reason for the pause is that the reader has completed a measure, or bar, of the rhythm. But there are two other kinds of pause, both of which lend variety to the movement. They are the *metrical* and the *rhythmical* (or *cæsural*).

The Metrical Pause indicates the omission of an unaccented syllable; sometimes, but very rarely, of an accented syllable It not only breaks the monotony of the metre, but in many cases produces an elocutionary effect — as when one pauses for emphasis in ordinary speech.

In the following iambic verses the metrical pause occurs where the caret (∧) indicates the missing light (unaccented) syllable:

Should auld | acquain | tance be | forgot,
And auld | ∧ lang | ∧ syne.

Another example would be,

∨ Break, | ∧ break, | ∧ break,
On thy cold | gray stones, | O sea.

The pauses before "lang" and "syne" emphasize those words. The pauses before "break" in the second example indicate the ebb of the wave; and gathered stress is in each case thrown upon the flow and break. The two light and hurried syllables of the substituted anapæst (On thy cold) seem in some degree to make up for the lacking syllables in the preceding line.

Another excellent example of the metrical pause is the following, from *As You Like It:*

Finds tongues | in trees, | ∧ *books* | *in the run* | ning brooks,
∧ Ser | *mons in stones,* | and good | in ev | erything.

Shakespeare intended the speaker, Jaques, to pause before

" books " and before " sermons " as if considering what object he should mention next. In each case the omitted syllable is further compensated for by an anapæst in the following foot. Some authorities would leave out the pauses and scan *bóoks in* and *sérmons* as trochees. But that would break the ascending iambic rhythm and would at the same time destroy the elocutionary effect. — Another good example of the metrical pause occurs in line 76 of Chaucer's *Prologue* to the *Canterbury Tales :*

∧ Ál bismotéred with his hábergeóun.

Metrical pauses are found most frequently in verse of a lyrical quality. They are like the " rest," or silence, that takes the place of a note in music.

The Rhythmical or Cæsural Pause does not indicate a missing syllable. It is a pause of the rhythm as it flows through the verses. (1) It does not mark the end of a verse but the end of a sentence or phrase within the verse. (2) It cuts the metre of a verse, either at the end of a foot or in the middle of a foot. The pause is commonly called the *cæsura*. The word means a " cut." (3) A verse may have one cæsura, or two, or none at all. (4) The cæsura may coincide with the punctuation, but it sometimes is a mere accommodation to the speaking voice or the listening ear. (5) The pause is always natural; and the more it shifts its position in the successive verses of a poem the more variety and charm it lends to the movement of the rhythm. (6) It is most effectively varied in the kinds of poetry which represent the sequences of everyday speech — narrative, drama, and reflective soliloquy, — the kinds that employ verses of five feet and more.

The following illustration from Milton's *Paradise Lost* is in blank verse, that is to say, — unrhymed iambic pentameters. The cæsuras are indicated by vertical dotted lines.

Thus Sá | tan, ⋮ tálk | ing tó | his néar | est máte,
With head | uplift | above | the wave, ⋮ and eyes
That spark | ling blazed; ⋮ his oth | er parts | besides,
∧ Prone | on the flood, ⋮ extend | ed long | and large,
Lay float | ing ma | ny a rood, ⋮ in bulk | as huge
As whom | the fa | bles name | of mon | strous size,
Tita | nian, ⋮ or | Earth-born, | that warred | on Jove.

In metres of all kinds the cæsura is called *masculine* when it comes after a stressed syllable — as in verse two, above, after "the wave." When it comes after an unstressed syllable it is called *feminine* — as in verse one, above, after "Satan."

In dactylic hexameter like that of *Evangeline*, the cæsura must not occur at the end of a foot, but within it. And often a verse has two cæsuras:

Bearded with | moss : and in | garments | green : indis | tinct in the | twilight.

In other metres of more than five feet, the cæsura falls usually near the middle of the verse.

3. *Accents, Hovering and Wrenched.* The metrical stress is sometimes varied by spreading it over two syllables of a foot. This distribution may be indicated by the use of the grave accent (ˋ) over each syllable. In the first line of *Lycidas*,

Yet once | *more, O* | ye Laú | *rels, and* | *once more,*

a heavy stress hovers over both syllables of the second foot and of the fifth (spondees). The naturally unaccented syllables of the fourth foot (pyrrhic) are pronounced slowly as if they divided with difficulty the stress that the iambic rhythm would throw upon the insignificant word "and." (1) The accent in these cases is *hovering*. (2) When the stress is thrown on the wrong syllable of a word, as in "my ain countrée," or on a syllable which has merely a secondary accent, as in "silentlý," the accent is said to be *wrenched*.

4. *Variation in the Syllable-Count.* Without any substitution whatever the poet sometimes adds a syllable or drops one from the regular count.

Added Syllables. (1) In a line of descending rhythm an extra syllable frequently appears at the beginning. This addition is called *anacrusis* (a striking up or backward). In the trochaic lines —

When the | stars threw | down their | spears
And | watered | heaven | with their | tears,

the "and" at the beginning of the second verse is an example of anacrusis. The unaccented extra syllable, "and," strikes

up, or reaches backward, to the syllable "spears" at the end of the preceding line, and combines with it to make a trochee. If there be two of these additional unaccented syllables at the beginning of a trochaic or dactylic line, they may similarly push backward and form a dactyl with the accented syllable at the end of the line preceding.

(2) In unrhymed iambic or anapæstic metres an additional unaccented syllable (sometimes two; rarely three) may follow the last stress, the natural close, of the verse. This addition is called a *hypercatalectic* or *feminine ending*. It lends elasticity to the metre.

That dúrst dislíke his reígn and mé preferring . . .

(3) Extra syllables inside the verse are sometimes slurred in reading. This device is called *elision* (striking off). It is frequently resorted to by Chaucer:

Th(e) estáat, th(e) arráy, the nómbr(e) and eék the cáuse.

(4) Another way of getting rid of the extra syllable is by *apocope*, — "cutting out" a vowel from the middle of a word, — as in "fi'ry," "pow'r." Apocope is another form of slurring.

Lacking Syllables. (1) In iambic and anapæstic metres, as we have seen, a light syllable is often lacking at the beginning of a verse:

And óft as íf her héad she bówed,
× Stoóp | ing through a fleécy cloud.

Such a line is said to be *truncated*. The omission is accounted for by a pause in the utterance. Sometimes the truncation gives the whole line a trochaic effect. (2) In trochaic and dactylic verse a light syllable is frequently lacking at the end. This omission is called *catalexis* (quitting). In Arnold's *Rugby Chapel* every line ceases with the stressed syllable of a trochee:

Cóldly, | sádly dé | scends ×
The) autumn | évening. The | field ×
Strewn with its | dank yellow | drifts ×

The first syllable of the second line combines with the last syllable of the first line to form a trochee by anacrusis: "scénds thĕ."

V. SOUND IN VERSE: MELODY

We have so far been considering verse as characterized by its movement: its rhythm, feet, and metres. But verse has also qualities derived from the material in which it works. The material used by verse is that of words. Words are sounds conveying thought. The sounds have different qualities. Each has a tone like a note in music. These tones following each other give verse its melody: somewhat like the melody of a tune.

21. **Melody.** — It is an essential of poetry that it should by the sound of its words so far as possible echo or suggest the emotion or mood of the poet. A very simple way to suggest a natural sound is to use a word that echoes or imitates it, such as "buzz," "boom," "crackle." This attempt at imitation is called *onomatopœia* (making a word like the sound). But the poet aims to suggest emotions and moods as well as to echo natural sounds. Sometimes the rhythm of his verse glides from the lips of the reader; sometimes it leaps. Sometimes it moves slowly, even reluctantly, sometimes rapidly. Sometimes the sound of the words suggests a tranquil mood, or gayety and ecstasy; at other times the sounds are sad, or they hiss and jerk with the language of violent passion. Sometimes the tone of the melody is fuller and richer and more varied than at others.

These different effects are produced so far as sound is concerned by the kinds of consonants and vowels used and by the order in which they follow one another. The poet does not necessarily inquire into the reason or follow set rules. He has a sensitive ear. He follows his instinct and he learns by experience. The ordinary reader does the same. A few examples will tell the story and suggest some of the reasons.

1. *Pleasant Sounds.* Read aloud the following lines from *The Ancient Mariner:*

> Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,
> Beloved from pole to polĕ!
> To Mary Queen the praise be given!
> She sent the gentle sleep from heaven,
> That slid into my soul. —

The thought is of comfort and the poet, Coleridge, has aimed to express the comfort not simply by the meaning of the words but by their sound. You feel that he has succeeded even though you may not know why. But simply stated, the reasons are as follows. (1) Nearly all the consonants in these lines are soft and resonant (*b*, *d*; *g*, as in *given*; *g*, as in *gentle*; *v*, as in *heaven*; *s*, pronounced as *z*, in *praise*; *th* as in *the*, *that*). These consonants prolong the voice easily. (2) Some are both resonant and liquid (*l*, *m*, *n*, *r*, *ng*). The *s*, which naturally would hiss, is used three times in combination with the liquid *l*; a pleasing sound results, as in *sleep*. (3) Most of the vowel sounds are long or open (*ēe*, *ō*; *ā*, as in *Mary*; *ai*, as in *praise*), or they are so combined with liquid consonants (as in g*entle*, th*ing*, *be*loved, f*rom*, s*ent*) that the sound lingers with a soothing effect.

2. *Unpleasant Sounds.* If, on the other hand, we read aloud a few lines that are intended to be the opposite of smooth and soothing we find a superabundance of sharp and hard, explosive and hissing, consonants. Like a wild-cat mad with wounds Horatius

> Sprang right at Astur's face;
> Through teeth, and skull, and helmet
> So fierce a thrust he sped,
> The good sword stood a hand-breadth out
> Behind the Tuscan's head.

(1) In the first three lines — those descriptive of the action — Macaulay has used twenty-four sharp or hard consonants (*p*, *t*, *k*, *f*, *h*, the hissing *s*, the thin *th*, as in *thrust*), and only sixteen of the soft. (2) Several of the consonants are explosive as well. Explosive consonants, like the *p* in *pop* (or in *sped*, above) are formed by closing the mouth-passage, and then bursting it with the breath. Other consonants used explosively in this quotation are *t*, *k*, and *f*. (3) In these lines the pleasing long and open vowels are few as compared with the short, closed, or nasal.

3. *Sequences.* (1) Just as by sequences of harsh consonants disagreeable effects are produced, so by sequences of soft and liquid consonants, agreeable effects — as in Tennyson's often quoted,

> Murmur of innumerable bees.

(2) By sequences of long and open vowels lines of solemn and inspiring melody may be produced. Notice the effect of such vowels in the apostrophe in Byron's *Childe Harold*, beginning—

> Oh Rome! my country, city of the Soul!
> The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,
> Lone mother of dead empires! and control . . .

(3) A most depressing effect results from the predominance of short, or of closed, vowels in the line that follows the preceding,—

> *I*n their sh*u*t br*e*asts their p*e*tty m*i*sery.

(4) The monotonous repetition of a long but closed vowel sound, as in the following lines from Tennyson's *Lotus-Eaters* is effectively expressive of boredom and weariness: —

> Most w*ea*ry s*ee*med the s*ea*, w*ea*ry the oar,
> W*ea*ry the wandering f*ie*lds of barren foam.

The effect here is of course heightened by the alliteration, or repetition of the consonants, *s*, *w*, *m*, *r*, and *f*.

(5) Numerous melodies result from the alternation of vowel sounds, — as in

> Wh*i*le the still m*o*rn went *ou*t with s*a*ndals gr*a*y.

Notice the regular variation of short or of closed vowels (like the *i* in "still") with long and open (like the *o* in "morn"). Those of the latter kind are italicized in the line above.

VI. SOUND IN VERSE: HARMONY; RHYME

22. Harmony. — We have seen that verse has melody, and that the melody depends upon the quality and arrangement of vowel and consonant sounds as they succeed each other in the line of poetry. But verse has also harmony, — somewhat like the harmony of notes in a chord of music. This harmony in verse is the recurrence, at short and regular intervals, of the same sound, or tone, in two or more words.

23. Rhyme. — The correspondence of word-sounds is called *Rhyme*. There are three kinds of rhyme: rhyme proper, or end-

rhyme; alliteration, or initial rhyme; and assonance, or middle-rhyme.

1. *Rhyme Proper.* Rhyme, properly so called, is end-rhyme. (1) It is the complete agreement of two or more words in their final sounds. (2) The rhyming words are at the end of two or more verses. (3) The rhyming sound begins in the *last accented* syllable of each of those verses. (4) In those verses the last accented vowel and all that follows it must be *identical* in sound. (5) The consonant sound preceding the last accented vowel in the rhyming verses must *not* be the same. (6) In the verses —

Flúshed with a púrple gráce
He shóws his hónest fáce,

the final syllables rhyme, but it is only the sound *ace* in each that makes the rhyme. The identity ends there. (7) It is just as necessary that the *f* should not be *gr*, as that the *ace* should be the same in the two words. "As-s*ess*" and "re-c*ess*" do not rhyme because the consonants preceding the final *ess* are identical in sound, even though one is an *s* and the other a *c*. The result is mere repetition of a whole syllable sound, and not rhyme. "Cry" and "try," on the other hand, rhyme — because the combination *cr*, beginning one syllable, produces a different sound from the combination *tr*, beginning the other.

The spelling has nothing to do with the rhyme; *buy* rhymes with *nigh*, although the rhyming sound is spelled differently in the two words. Even if the spelling is the same but the sound different, there is no rhyme: *torn* does not rhyme correctly with *scorn*, but *morn* does.

Sometimes the rhyme depends upon a syllable with a secondary accent: Milton rhymes *libertý* with *thee*. Rhymes of one syllable, as "fair" and "square," "forbear" and "compare" are called *masculine;* those of more syllables than one, such as "mérry" — "véry," "mérrily" — "vérily," "sáturated" — "máturated" — whether double, triple, or quadruple — are called *feminine*. The rhyming words may stand at the end of each half of a verse, as in

My feet have *trod* so near to *Gód*,

This is called *Internal Rhyme*.

2. *Alliteration*, or, as it is sometimes called, initial rhyme, is the recurrence at short intervals of the opening sound of accented syllables. The repetition is generally of initial consonant sounds, as in

I *sl*ip, I *sl*ide, I *gl*oom, I *gl*ance
Among the *s*kimming *s*wallows.

Our Anglo-Saxon forefathers allowed also any opening vowel to alliterate with any other. In modern poetry the alliteration of consonants may occur anywhere in a line or a series of lines; even in the middle of words and at the beginning of unaccented syllables.

3. *Assonance*, or middle-rhyme, is the identity of accented vowel sounds, as in "r*oa*reth," "f*oa*meth," when the consonant sounds preceding and following the vowels do not agree. Assonance of this kind is introduced by Matthew Arnold in *Rugby Chapel* with somewhat of the effect of end-rhyme:

O strong soul, by what sh*o*re
Tarriest thou now? For that f*o*rce . . .
Somewhere, surely, af*a*r
In the sounding labor-house v*a*st . .

But ordinarily, assonance is used not as a substitute for the harmony of verse endings, but as an element in the melody of vowel-sequence: as in the first line above,

Oh strong s*ou*l, by what sh*o*re.

4. *The Refrain.* The effect of rhyme is produced also by the device called *refrain:* the repetition at fixed intervals of certain words or of a line or two. A good example will be found in Burns's *Duncan Gray*. In each stanza the words of the second, fourth, and eighth lines are identical.

Duncan Gray came here to woo
Ha, ha, the wooin' o't!
On blythe Yule night when we were fou,
Ha, ha, the wooin' o't!—

and so on. Other examples of the refrain will be found in the French forms of verse written by Andrew Lang and Mr. Dobson,

and in Mr. Noyes's *The Barrel-Organ*. The refrain is an important feature in the older, and many of the later, ballads.

VII. LARGER UNITS OF VERSE: STANZAS

The various elements of verse hitherto discussed, rhythm and metre, melody and harmony, combine in the production of stanzas.

24. The Stanza. — As the verse consists of units which are feet, so the stanza is made of units which are verses. The stanza is the largest definite subdivision of verse-measure in a poem. It is frequently, indeed, a little poem in itself. (1) If regular, each stanza has the same number of verses, — that is, of lines. (2) All the stanzas follow the same scheme of rhythm, metre, and rhyme. (3) The scheme should be appropriate to the emotional thought of the poem. (4) The sentence may continue from one stanza to the next without pause. But each stanza should yield its definite impression. (5) In blank verse there is no stanza; the progressive parts are sentence, paragraph, and canto or book.

1. *The Couplet* is a pair of rhyming verses. Even though the couplets may be printed separately they are not usually regarded as stanzas, because they are rarely independent and self-explanatory. (1) Couplets of iambic pentameters are called *heroic*. A poem of continuous heroic couplets is said to be written in *heroic verse* — for instance, —

> Say what strange motive, Goddess! could compel
> A well-bred Lord to assault a gentle Belle?
> O say what stranger cause, yet unexplored,
> Could make a gentle Belle reject a Lord?

(2) In this quotation from Pope's *Rape of the Lock* the final verse of each couplet is said to be *closed*, because it completes the sense. (3) The first line above is said to be *run-on*, because the sense does not pause; it flows over into the second line. (4) The third line, in which the sense pauses at the end, is called *end-stopped*. (5) In the following four verses the first couplet is called *free*, because the sense runs without pausing into the second couplet. The second and third verses are " run on ":

This Nymph, to the destruction of mankind,
Nourished two Locks, which graceful hung behind
In equal curls, and well conspired to deck
With shining ringlets her smooth ivory neck.

The closed couplet was brought to perfection by Dryden and Pope. The free couplet and frequent run-on line are found in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and in the romantic poets of the nineteenth century, Shelley, Keats, and their followers.

To the qualities of the individual line of verse, namely, metre and melody, the stanza adds that of harmony. The rhyming sounds link the verses together; and the effect of the stanza upon the ear is somewhat like that of a musical chord. To represent the rhyme-scheme of a stanza we may indicate each rhyming sound in the order of its appearance by a letter, *a* or *b* or *c*, etc., and use that letter for that sound throughout. A line that does not rhyme may be indicated by *y*. Most of our examples are drawn from the poems contained in this volume. When the examples are not quoted, the student may usually find them by referring to our Table of Contents.

2. *Three-line Stanzas.* Of the three-line stanza there are two principal forms. One is the *triplet*, in which all the lines rhyme to the same sound, *aaa*, *bbb*, *ccc*, etc. See Edmund Gosse's *Lying in the Grass:*

I do not hunger for a well-stored mind,
I only wish to live my life and find
My heart in unison with all mankind.

My life is like the single dewy star
That trembles on the horizon's primrose-bar —
A microcosm where all things living are.

The other form is *terza rima*, used with astonishing diversity of effect by Dante in the *Divine Comedy*, and by Shelley in his *Ode to the West Wind*. The first and third lines of *terza rima* rhyme; the second gives the rhyme to the first and third of the next stanza, thus: *aba*, *bcb*, *cdc*, etc.

3. *Four-line Stanzas.* Of the stanza of four verses, called ordinarily the Quatrain, the better-known varieties (all iambic) are the following:

(1) Common Metre. This is the popular measure, *a a b b*, of

the old ballads and of many of our hymns. It consists of alternating lines of four iambic and three iambic feet (*4xa, 3xa*).

> Must I be carried to the skies
> On flowery beds of ease,
> While others fought to win the prize
> And sailed through bloody seas?

Sometimes one rhyme is masculine and the other feminine. And frequently the stanza runs *a b y b*, the third line not rhyming. See Coleridge's *The Ancient Mariner* and Mr. Yeats's *Father Gilligan.*

(2) Long Metre and Short Metre. Of Long Metre — iambic tetrameter rhyming *a a b b* — a good example is the Doxology, "Praise God from Whom all blessings flow." See also Marlowe's *The Passionate Shepherd*, and Stevenson's *The Land of Counterpane.* Of Short Metre, iambic trimeter rhyming *a b a b*, but with an additional foot in the third line, an example is —

> The world can never give
> The bliss for which we sigh;
> 'Tis not the whole of life to live,
> Nor all of death to die.

Of the Quatrain there are numerous other kinds, — such as that used by Burns in his *Scots Wha Hae*, in which the stanzas run *a a a b, c c c b, d d d b*, the last verse of each stanza taking the *b* rhyme; or the variation of Short Metre, *y b y b*, with a dimeter in the last line, used by Keats in *La Belle Dame;* or the anapæstic trimeters of O'Sullivan's *Ballad of the Fiddler*, rhyming *y a y a.* But the most highly artistic quatrains are: (1) the Elegiac Stanza of Gray's *Elegy* and Sir William Watson's *Wordsworth's Grave*, iambic pentameters, rhyming *a b a b;* (2) the *In Memoriam* Stanza of Tennyson's great elegy, iambic tetrameters, rhyming *a b b a;* (3) the Fitzgerald Stanza used in that poet's version of the *Rubáiyát* of Omar Khayyám. This last, not represented in our book, is of iambic pentameters, rhyming *a a y a:*

> Yet, ah, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!
> That Youth's sweet-scented manuscript should close!
> The Nightingale that in the branches sang,
> Ah whence, and whither flown again, who knows?

The *In Memoriam* and Fitzgerald quatrains are signally adapted to the expression of reflective, didactic, or elegiac moods.

4. *Stanzas of Five, Six, and Seven Lines.* Five-line Stanzas are obtained by adding a rhyme in *a* or *b*, as in Shakespeare's *Who is Sylvia?* (*a b a b a*) or Shelley's *The Skylark* (*a b a b b*); or by rearranging, as in Mr. Bridges' *I Love all Beauteous Things* (*y a b b a*).

Of Six-line Stanzas the more common are: *a a b b c c* (Browning's *All Service Ranks the Same*); *a b a b a b* (Byron's *She Walks in Beauty*); *a b a b c c* (Wordsworth's *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud*, Mr. Kipling's *Recessional*); *a a a b a b* (Burns's *To a Mouse*); *y a y a y a* (Rossetti's *The Blessed Damozel*); *a a b c c b* (Shakespeare's *Blow, Blow, thou Winter Wind*, Browning's *Rabbi Ben Ezra*).

Of Seven-line Stanzas the best-known are the *a a b c c c b* of *America*, and the stanza named after Chaucer — the Chaucerian, or after James I of Scotland — Rhyme Royal, which runs *a b a b b c c*. Examples of the rhyme royal to which the student should turn are Morris's *Apology* before *The Earthly Paradise* and Mr. Masefield's *Dauber*.

5. *Stanzas of Eight Lines and More.* The Eight-line Stanza is frequently formed by doubling the system of a quatrain, — as in Ben Jonson's *Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes* (*a b c b a b c b*) and Browning's *The Year's at the Spring* (*a b c d a b c d*); or by adding one quatrain to another, as in Mr. Kipling's *If* (*a b a b c d c d*) and Macaulay's *Horatius* (*y a y a y b y b*); or by linking together two quatrains in the common rhyme of the second, fourth, and eighth lines, as in Swinburne's *The Garden of Proserpine* (*a b a b c c c b*). Many other combinations are used. See, for instance, Wordsworth's *The Solitary Reaper*. Of the numerous eight-line varieties the most famous, however, are the *ottava rima*, followed by Byron in *Don Juan* (*a b a b a b c c*):

> Most epic poems plunge *in medias res*
> (Horace makes this the turn-pike road),
> And then your hero tells, whene'er you please,
> What went before, — by way of episode,
> While seated after dinner at his ease,
> Beside his mistress in some soft abode,
> Palace or garden, paradise or cavern
> Which serves the happy couple for a tavern;

and second, the stanza of the French *ballade*, of which an example will be given under the fixed verse-forms that use a refrain. Its rhymes run *a b a b b c b c*, as in Lang's *Ballade of Middle Age.*

If we add to the iambic pentameters of this scheme an Alexandrine (a verse of six iambic feet), rhyming in *c*, we produce the famous nine-line Spenserian Stanza (*a b a b b c b c c*), as in *The Faerie Qucene*, Keats's *Eve of St. Agnes*, Burns's *Cotter's Saturday Night*, and Byron's *Childe Harold.*

There are many recognized stanzas of greater length than those described above. The number of lines, the metrical length of each, and the order of the rhymes are determined by the poet in accordance with his aim and his skill in metrical arrangement and verbal harmony. The only rules are that the rhythm be maintained and the stanzas be uniform. When the metrical scheme is simple and regular it may be conveniently represented thus: for a four-line stanza of iambic tetrameter, such as that of *In Memoriam*, $4(4xa)$; for a Chaucerian Stanza, $8(5xa)$; for a Spenserian Stanza, $8(5xa) + 1(6xa)$; and so forth.

VIII. POEMS OF FIXED STRUCTURE

In some kinds of stanzaic verse the whole poem is cast in a fixed structural form. Having chosen one of the traditional forms of fixed structure the poet should abide by its rules.

25. The Regular Ode. — In general the Ode is a lyric poem expressive of exalted and enthusiastic emotion. When regular it imitates the scheme adopted by the Greek lyric poet, Pindar. In that scheme there were three movements. The first, called the *strophe* or "turn," and the second, called the *antistrophe* or "reverse turn," were chanted by a chorus of singers as they moved up one side of the orchestra of the theatre and came down the other. The third movement, called the *epode*, was chanted after the chorus had come to a stand. The rhythm of the third movement is trochaic; of the first two iambic. The scheme is elaborate and not to be lightly attempted. We include no examples of the Regular Ode. *The Progress of Poetry* by Gray is regarded as the best of the species in English. A more elastic form of the ode, called irregular, has been

the vehicle of some of the finest poems in the language; for instance, Dryden's *Alexander's Feast*, Wordsworth's *Ode on Immortality*, and Tennyson's on *The Death of the Duke of Wellington*. Of these the first two will be found in the text.

26. The Sonnet. — The Sonnet was introduced from Italy by Wyatt and was employed, with variations, by Sidney, Spenser, Shakespeare and many other sixteenth-century poets. It fell into disuse after the death of Milton, but was revived toward the end of the eighteenth century. It has had wide and merited vogue from that time on. The legitimate or Italian form has fourteen lines and consists of two parts — an *octave*, rhyming *a b b a a b b a*, and a *sestet*, six lines, rhyming preferably *c d e c d e*, or *c d c d c d*. Examples of the fourteen lines thus properly arranged are Milton's *On his Blindness*, in which the sestet consists of two divisions or *tercets*, running *c d e, c d e ;* also Wordsworth's *The World Is Too Much with Us* and Keats's *On Chapman's Homer*, in which the second of the sestets mentioned above is used. For these, see the selections in the body of this volume.

The thought or mood must be significant and lucid, a poetical unit, single in its emotional and imaginative effect. The octave bears the burden ; a doubt, a problem, a reflection, a query, an historical statement, a cry of indignation or desire, a vision of the ideal. The sestet eases the load, resolves the problem or the doubt, answers the query, solaces the yearning, realizes the vision. Some writers of sonnets go so far as to vary the arrangement of rhymes in the octave or in the sestet. But the legitimate sonnet does not readily tolerate liberties.

27. The Shakesperian Sonnet is a variety quite distinct. Except in limiting itself to fourteen lines it does not pretend to conform to the Italian model, and its effect is different. It has neither octave nor sestet. It consists of twelve lines (three quatrains, each of independent and alternating rhymes) and a concluding couplet. Its merits are those of its distinctive structure. The concluding, often epigrammatic, couplet, which would not be tolerated in the regular sonnet, is here a fitting climax to the three four-line stanzas of alternating rhymes that have preceded. This kind of fixed form is sometimes called a *fourteener*.

28. Fixed Forms with Refrain. — Other forms of verse hav-

ing a fixed rhyme-structure are the *rondeau*, *rondel*, *triolet*, and *villanelle*, each of which has two rhymes, and the *ballade*, which has more. They are borrowed from French models, and they are characterized in common by the presence of a refrain. Chaucer and some of his contemporaries tried a species of ballade, and Wyatt wrote rondeaus. Rossetti also wrote them. But it was not until recently, and under the leadership of poets, some of them still living, such as Austin Dobson and Edmund Gosse, that the refrain-structure obtained popularity in England. None of its varieties may possess the dignity and inevitableness of the sonnet, but they have lightness, harmony, lucidity, and grace.

1. *The Rondeau.* An example of this form of poem-structure, entitled *With Pipe and Flute*, is printed among our selections from Mr. Dobson, below. If the student will turn to it, he will observe that it consists of thirteen lines arranged in three sections; and that the second and third sections conclude with an unrhymed refrain which is itself a repetition of the first few words of the first line, — "With pipe and flute." These words are the keynote of the poem. The scheme runs *a a b b a*, *a a b R*, *a a b b a R* (*R* standing for the refrain).

2. *The Rondel* has thirteen, or fourteen, lines; and like the rondeau it is divided into three sections. If the student will turn to Mr. Dobson's rondel *The Wanderer*, given below, he will notice that the first section has four lines, the second four, and the third five. He will notice also that the second section closes with a refrain which consists of the first two lines of the poem, and that the third section closes with a refrain which consists of only the first line of the poem — "Love comes back to his vacant dwelling." If we indicate the refrain lines by capitals, the scheme will appear as *A B b a*, *a b A B*, *a b b a A*. In the rondel of fourteen lines the only essential difference is that the refrain of the last section repeats both of the opening lines. *The Wanderer* would be a rondel of fourteen lines if it ended thus:

> Love comes back to his vacant dwelling, —
> The old, old Love that we knew of yore.

The scheme of the third section would then run *a b b a A B*.

3. *The Triolet*, like the rondel, repeats not merely a snatch of a verse, but a whole line or two in its refrain. It consists of eight lines rhyming *A B a A a b A B*, and it is desirable that the refrains (indicated as before by capitals) be varied in sentence-structure or meaning. A good example is Mr. Dobson's *Rose Crossed the Road*, to which the student should turn.

4. *The Villanelle*, also, owes much of its charm to a subtle handling of the refrain. This structural form possesses a singularly graceful and soothing harmony, and is adapted to themes of serious and reminiscent mood, sometimes plaintive. If the student will turn to Mr. Dobson's exquisite verses, *For a Copy of Theocritus*, he will observe that the villanelle consists of five stanzas of three lines apiece (tercets) concluded by a quatrain. The tercets run *a b a*. The first line of the first tercet — "O Singer of the field and fold" — becomes the third, or refrain, of the second and fourth tercets; the third line of the first tercet — "Thine was the happier Age of Gold" — reappears as the third line, or refrain, of the third and fifth tercets. The two refrains compose the final lines of the quatrain. They are the burden of the whole. The scheme may be represented as follows: A^1bA^2, abA^1, abA^2, abA^1, abA^2, abA^1A^2 (A^1 standing for the first refrain; A^2 for the second).

5. *The Ballade* is of greater length than the preceding, and it employs more than two rhymes. The refrain is still the characteristic feature. The ballade has greater potentialities than any other of the French fixed forms: it is sublime or humorous, subtle or naïve, serious or ironical, but always graceful and melodious. It is capable of varied imagery and of rich and unexpected, but dignified, harmony. An amusing and highly instructive example is Andrew Lang's *Ballade of Middle Age*, printed in our selections from that author. It will delight youth as well as those whose hair has begun to turn. This ballade consists of three stanzas of eight lines each, and a quatrain, called the *envoy*, or "message." The rhyme scheme is *a b a b b c b C* for the first three octaves, and *b c b C* for the *envoy*, (the *C* standing for the refrain). The *envoy*, according to former custom, was addressed to some person of high degree, king or prince. It is both a dedication and a summing up of the vital

thought of the poem. Other forms of the ballade obtain, but the fundamental system is illustrated by the *Ballade of Middle Age.*

IX. THE KINDS OF POETRY

29. The principal kinds of poetry are: the *lyrical*, which is of the nature of song, whether set to music or intended to be read; the *narrative*, in which the poet tells a story, or describes characters and scenes in detail and in order as if he were telling a story; the *dramatic*, in which the characters, speaking and acting, play their own story out before us.

30. Lyric Poetry. — The Lyric expresses personal emotion in a "singable" or, at any rate, tuneful form. The emotion is personal, whether it arises from the poet's individual experience or the experience of others with whom he sympathizes, or from an experience that he has imagined and made his own. (1) In its most intense *mood* the lyric is the expression of individual feeling or passion. (2) In a calmer mood it expresses a sentiment aroused by contemplation of nature or of external events. (3) In its highest manifestation the lyric gives imaginative utterance to emotions, sentiments, ideals that are universal and uplift humanity.

The lyric had its origin in the chorus of primitive peoples sung by the whole of a community to celebrate some event affecting all alike. The tune and the words were made up little by little by different persons in the singing crowd. It was not till a later period that an individual poet composed the whole song.

The more simple and profound the feeling that moves the poet and the more nearly he expresses the instincts of the people, the more likely is his lyric to take the form of song. The more reflective and literary the lyric, the less is it likely to be sung. But it must always stir the emotions, not only by its rhythm and imagery, but by the tuneful quality of its words, — as if it were adapted to the singing voice. Even the restrained and thoughtful lyrics of modern times fulfil these requirements. In brief, the lyric (1) should be emotional and sincere and tuneful. (2) It should be the record of a single emotion; (3) if

reflective, it should be the more highly imaginative; (4) if narrative or dramatic in style, it should aim not to *tell a story* but to give the emotional atmosphere of a story at some crisis in its career; (5) it must not relax the emotional strain; (6) its mood and purpose should be free from all ambiguity. (7) Its imagery may be rich and allusive, but it is generally simple; it should never be profuse. (8) The lyric is usually short. (9) The style should be natural, easy to understand, and graceful.

There may be as many kinds of lyric poem as there are moods to be sung and degrees of emotional intensity in the singer.

1. *The Song* is simple in phrase and metre, is divided into stanzas, and is brief and to the point. In sentiment it is *personal* or *communal*. (1) Personal songs spring from emotions that affect the intimate interests of the individual — his loves and despairs, hopes and fears, joys and griefs, his jest and earnest, his ideals. Of such are Burns's *A Red, Red Rose* and *Bonie Doon*, Tennyson's *Sweet and Low*, Shakespeare's *Under the Greenwood Tree*. Many of the best songs were crooned in the making to the airs for which they were designed. (2) Songs of the Communal type arise from and affect the broader social emotions. They are songs of the religious feelings — the hymn and sacred anthem; songs of patriotism — the heroic lay (Burns's *Scots Wha Hae*), the national hymn and anthem; songs of conviviality (*Auld Lang Syne*), and of the local interests of a group (Peele's *Harvestmen a-Singing*).

2. *The Ode* is by its origin intended to be sung, and though it may be dedicated to an individual subject or person it deals with emotions of the communal or spiritual kind. It is still occasionally composed for musical accompaniment, but more frequently for reading. The ode lends itself to the expression of enthusiasm, of passion under the control of highly imaginative reflection, of panegyric and dignified lament. Its form has been already discussed in the section devoted to Poems of Fixed Structure. The finest example in this book is Wordsworth's *Intimations of Immortality*.

3. *The Simple Lyric* is a poem, sometimes song-like, but intended for reading. The simple lyric is not long. It is pri-

marily emotional, but also slightly meditative. It is frequently suggested by some aspect of nature or by some casual incident. Good examples are Wordsworth's *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud*, Suckling's *Why so Pale and Wan, Fond Lover?* Mr. Yeats's *Lake Isle of Innisfree*, and *The Fiddler of Dooney*.

4. *The Reflective Lyric* is less spontaneous than the preceding. The meditation is of a graver cast and of a more general interest, and it leads to a thoughtful conclusion. The reflective lyric is sometimes short, as for instance, Wordsworth's *My Heart Leaps Up*, Browning's *Prospice*, Herbert's *Virtue*, Mr. De la Mare's *The Truants*. But in the development of the theme lyrics of nature or of human passion may attain a moderate length. Poems of this kind, in which the speaker reflects at some length upon his own feelings, are *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* of Milton, Browning's *Rabbi Ben Ezra*, Tennyson's *Ulysses*, and the well-nigh perfect lyrics (not strictly odes) of Keats, *To a Nightingale*, and *On a Grecian Urn*. See also under Dramatic Monologue, § 31, 9.

5. *The Elegy* is a reflective lyric suggested by the fact or fancy of death. (1) The emotion, if personal, finds utterance in lament, tempered, however, by tranquil consideration of the mutability of life, the immutability of something that justifies existence. Consider, for example, the elegies of Milton, Gray, Shelley, and Arnold in this volume, and Tennyson's *In Memoriam*. (2) If the emotion is more impersonal it finds utterance in a critical, but still imaginative and dignified, review of some spiritual or historical phase of life, — as, for instance, in Sir William Watson's *Wordsworth's Grave*.

6. *The Sonnet*, like the ode, was originally composed for a musical accompaniment. As a song it was preferably of love. (1) The elaborate structure of the sonnet does not lend itself readily to the utterance of unadorned feeling. (2) The best English sonnets are a formal and imaginative expression of a definite thought. (3) They are pervaded by a refined and sometimes highly spiritual emotion. See the sonnets of Milton and Wordsworth in our text. (4) The sonnet has fourteen lines and a conventional scheme of movement, for which see under Poems of Fixed Structure.

7. The lyric may also be narrative in manner and dramatic in quality. Of the Narrative Lyric examples are Browning's *The Patriot*, some of the humorous *Adventures of Seumas Beg* by Mr. James Stephens, and Mr. De la Mare's *The Little Bird*. An example of the Dramatic Lyric is Browning's *Incident in the French Camp*. But whether narrative or dramatic these poems are true to the principle of the lyric: they express or suggest the atmosphere of an emotional crisis.

31. **Narrative Poetry**. — Narrative poetry tells the story of a series of events, or describes characters and scenes in detail and in order as one would tell a story. Of the essentially narrative poem the noblest type is the Epic.

1. *The Epic* is a calm and dignified narrative in uniform and majestic verse of a momentous action in which heroic characters and supernatural beings take part under the control of the Supreme Being or of destiny. (1) The theme is generally political and martial, involving the material welfare of a people or of peoples. Sometimes it is religious, involving the spiritual interests of many peoples. (2) The basis of the story is familiar to the people concerned, — drawn from their traditions, or myths, or from their bible. (3) The poet recounts the events without betraying emotion. He lets the characters display their motives and feelings by their conduct and conversation. (4) The hero is either supernatural or of exalted personality and power. (5) The action covers but a short period, and the plot has completeness and unity. (6) The poet awakens the interest of his readers by plunging at once into the middle of the action. (7) He then turns to what caused the conflict and, by means of episodes, or brief digressions, conveys the information necessary to a proper understanding of the main story. (8) The epic awakens the sense of the wonderful, the awful, the sublime. (9) The metrical form is that which national custom has proved most acceptable: among the Greeks and Romans, the dactylic hexameter; in English, generally blank verse or the six- or seven-stress iambic line of older English narrative poetry.

The Great Epic of old grew little by little out of still earlier songs and narrative poems that celebrated popular heroes. These were finally put together by a school of poets or by some

one poet into an epic of the folk. Of such Great Folk-Epics examples are the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* of the Greeks and the *Beowulf* of our Old English ancestors. The folk-epic did not aim to teach any moral lesson. The hearer or reader was expected to draw his own conclusions about the relations of man to man and of man to God. The Modern Epic, though based upon traditional stories and beliefs, is the composition of an individual poet. Such epics are the *Aeneid* of Vergil, the *Divine Comedy* of Dante, the *Paradise Lost* of Milton, the *Sigurd the Volsung* of William Morris. In the modern and individual epic the subject is frequently treated in such a way as to emphasize some definite ideal.

2. *The Mock Epic.* This species of narrative poem is called also "mock-heroic." The poet treats of a commonplace and trivial incident or series of incidents, and makes it ridiculous by pretending that it is serious and telling a story about it in the grand manner of the epic. The best examples in English are Butler's *Hudibras* and Pope's *Rape of the Lock.* For a statement of some of the peculiarities of the mock epic and for illustrations of the mock-heroic style see our Notes on the *Rape of the Lock.*

3. *The Ballad* is a short story in a traditional popular form of verse about individuals and events of popular interest. Sometimes it is historical and heroic in character but, more frequently, local and romantic. (1) The theme is simple. (2) It may be warlike (*Otterbourne*, Macaulay's *Horatius*); or adventurous and chivalrous (*The Robin Hood Ballads*); or supernatural (*The Demon Lover*, *The Ancient Mariner*, Keats's *La Belle Dame sans Merci*). It may be of love (happily ending, *The Bailiff's Daughter of Islington;* unhappily, *Helen of Kirkconnell*); or of humor (*John Gilpin's Ride*); or of death (*Bessie Bell and Mary Gray*). It is often tragic or pathetic. (3) It combines lyrical and dramatic qualities. (4) The treatment is conversational with question and answer, repetition of details and of statements and set phrases. (5) It makes free use of the refrain.

Like the epic, the ballad was originally intended to be sung. It grew up among the people, and the individuals who helped

to make it were soon forgotten. Only in later times is it the composition of a poet working by himself. Ballads written by individual poets, for instance, Scott, Rossetti, Swinburne, and Mr. Masefield, are best when they reproduce most nearly the atmosphere and simplicity of the folk-ballad. Excellent examples in this book are those of Coleridge, Macaulay, Mr. Kipling, Mr. Yeats, Mr. Noyes, and "Seumas O'Sullivan."

4. *The Metrical Romance* is a narrative, generally of a popular kind, dealing with the career of individuals in wonderful and romantic circumstances. (1) It is more pretentious than the ballad. It is shorter than the epic, less momentous and heroic in theme, and less formal and dignified. (2) The story is sometimes of historical importance, but it is not restricted to historical or traditional materials: it is the fiction of a poet. (3) The subject is of chivalrous adventure, of love or other personal devotion, sometimes of heroism. (4) There may be a supernatural element, but the hero generally acts as if of his own free will. (5) The poem may be written in any metrical form appropriate to the subject, but the style must be easy and popular. — The English metrical romance is a product of the middle ages. Among the best modern examples are Scott's *Lady of the Lake*, Keats's *The Eve of St. Agnes*, Arnold's *The Forsaken Merman*, Morris's stories in *The Earthly Paradise*, and Mr. Noyes's *Drake*.

5. *The Tale* is simpler than the romance. (1) It does not give the appearance of dealing with heroes or, in a serious way, with supernatural agencies. (2) It narrates without any pomp or pose the loves, ambitions, trials, and adventures (often humorous) of every-day individuals in a domestic or other unpretentious sphere of life. (3) It presents a picture of manners and morals generally of the poet's own age, but sometimes of an earlier period. (4) The principal character may be genuinely heroic, but if so he is utterly unconscious of the fact. — Fine examples of the Tale are some of the stories in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, Burns's *Tam o' Shanter*, Tennyson's *Enoch Arden*, Mr. Kipling's *Gunga Din*, and Mr. Masefield's *Dauber*.

6. *Allegory* makes use of the narrative form for the purpose of conveying a lesson. It personifies virtues or vices or other

human qualities, that is to say, represents them as men and women. It makes them characters in a story, sometimes in a drama. The *Faerie Queene* is the noblest allegory in English poetry. It has the dignity, style, and stately imagery of the modern epic and the chivalry of the old metrical romance. It has at times the human interest of real characters and the narrative interest of the epic and the romance. What it lacks in these respects it makes up by poetic beauty and exalted moral emotion. In prose our noblest allegory is Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress.*

The foregoing are the principal kinds of narrative poetry in which the emphasis is laid upon the recital of events rather than upon description. Characters and scenes are described, but the main artistic interest is that of plot. There, is however, another kind of narrative poetry in which the author (1) makes just as much of the description as he does of the plot; as, for instance, the Idyll. Or (2) he lays the stress altogether upon the recital in due order, not of *events*, but of *objects* and of the poet's observations and sometimes of the emotions arising from them. Such a poem is called *Descriptive.*

7. *The Idyll* lays as much emphasis upon the picturesque quality of scenes, characters, or events, as upon the story itself — sometimes more. The name means "a little type or form"; or, some say, "a little picture." The idyll may be a little epic in form, or a little drama, or a little lyrical description. It may combine qualities of all three kinds. We regard it here as a narrative form of poetry.

(1) The idyll is apparently simple, but it is not, like the ballad, a popular product; it is a highly artistic literary form. (2) It presents a fragment of life in minute detail. (3) It is always pictorial. (4) It tells its story or depicts its scenes and characters in a tranquil manner, or at any rate with emotional restraint. (5) It is concerned with the situation rather than with the action. (6) The situation is colored by the surroundings, generally as if nature were sympathizing or influencing. (7) If the idyll deals with country interests and domestic scenes — the life of shepherds or farmers, there may be action and a simple plot (the *Book of Ruth*, — prose; some of the idylls of

the Greek poet, Theocritus, — verse); or there may be scarcely any action and the quality may be lyrical (Burns's *Cotter's Saturday Night*, Mr. Gosse's *Lying in the Grass*). Such idylls of rural life are called *Pastorals*. (8) The idyll may deal with the more refined social life of city or court, and in dialogue form (Theocritus, again). (9) It occasionally deals with heroic themes (the *Book of Esther*; Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*). The *Idylls of the King* are indeed so heroic, so full of action and narrative interest, that they are not idylls in the strict sense of the word. They are rather little epics or episodes of an epic theme. (10) The idyll may involve the action and emotions even of supernatural beings (Theocritus; the *Marpessa* of Stephen Phillips).

8. *The Descriptive Poem.* The descriptive poem lays no stress upon events or plot-interest, but recites the author's *observations* about characters or natural objects. The poem, however, is still of the narrative kind. No writer has come nearer perfection in this form of poetry than Chaucer. In the *Prologue to the Canterbury Tales* Chaucer depicts characters just as he saw them or heard about them, without elaborating details of action or indulging in profound reflection. Each of the descriptions in the *Prologue* is a portrait; some are almost impersonal photographs. Chaucer refrains from any display of emotion, but he awakens in the reader a lively interest in persons as real as imagination could make them. He does not tell a story; but his account of each character, such as the Poor Parson or the Wife of Bath, is narrative in quality, and the account of all the characters in succession gives one much of the pleasure derived from a story of events.

When, on the other hand, the descriptive poet indulges in *reflection* about the persons or scenes that he depicts and when he betrays his feelings about them, his account, while still a narration, takes on a lyrical tinge. Indeed it is frequently hard to decide whether the poem is not really a reflective lyric. Examples would be Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* and Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey* and Thomson's *Seasons*. In that most imaginative descriptive poem, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, there is a slight narrative thread; but all that Byron narrates is the series

of reflections and emotions awakened in him by natural objects and scenes, by historical events and characters.

9. *The Dramatic Monologue.* In this form of poetry — not part of a drama, but an independent narrative — the speaker rehearses situations and emotions in such a way as to suggest that those who are listening to him are taking part in the conversation. He conveys this impression by making reference to their supposed remarks and gestures. Browning is a master of the dramatic monologue. See, for instance, his *Andrea del Sarto* and *My Last Duchess.* Other dramatic monologues, such as Tennyson's *Ulysses* and *Œnone*, have not only the narrative but the lyrical characteristic. Browning's *Rabbi Ben Ezra* is more purely reflective and lyrical than narrative or dramatic.

32. **Poetry by Action; Drama.** — The drama presents the story of a conflict in human life. The events are conveyed to us not by way of narrative but by the characters of the story as if present in person and, by their conduct and speech, playing out the conflict before our eyes. When the drama is put upon the stage the characters are represented by actors. The drama selects only those motives, characters, and situations that are necessary to the plot. The plot must have unity of interest and, therefore, unity of action and an adequate, that is to say, a satisfactory conclusion, whether happy or unhappy.

In its structure the drama is divided into "acts," generally three or four or five. (1) The earlier part of the play is the *Exposition.* It shows the reason for the story, the nature of the coming conflict, the motives of the individuals concerned. (2) The second stage of the play is one of thickening plot and growing interest. It is the *Complication.* The threads of conflicting motive are entangled and the resulting action is developed in an ascending series of situations. The last of these situations conducts the action to its *Climax.* The climax is some important change of fortune or some discovery of a secret, or both. This is the highest point of interest, so far: one party or individual seems to have the upper hand. But our anxiety is not allayed, nor is our curiosity satisfied, because we are not yet sure how the end is to be brought about. (3) The third stage, generally shorter than the second, is the *Solution.* It

unravels the complication and conducts the action to its conclusion: in Tragedy, to a *Catastrophe* or "downfall"; in Comedy, to a *Dénouement* or "unknotting" — a happy ending. (4) In a five-act play the complication is well under way before the end of the first act. The climax may be reached by the end of the third act or the middle of the fourth.

1. In *Tragedy* the theme is grave and exalted. The conflict involves life and death, for it is a clash between man's will and uncompromising law, physical or human or divine. The individuals concerned are ranged on either side of the struggle, and the struggle is pursued until the principal character and what he represents are crushed.

(1) The motives must be sufficient. (2) The characters must not be (unless the play is an allegory) mere personifications of a virtue or a vice but individuals of flesh and blood, each with his distinct peculiarities. (3) Comic scenes are admissible; by contrast with them the tragic shadow is deepened. (4) The action, no matter how startling, must be reasonable and probable. (5) The catastrophe is foreshadowed and inevitable; it is an unavoidable consequence of the action. (6) The principal character, or "hero," may have an evil purpose (Richard III, Macbeth); or he may be deluded by himself or by others into espousing a purpose that puts him in the wrong (Brutus, Othello) or, while pursuing a justifiable purpose, he may be involved by accident or by impulse in circumstances over which he has no control and that close upon him and crush him (Romeo, Juliet, Hamlet). (7) Minor characters, even when they are innocent, are often implicated and lose their lives (Ophelia, Desdemona). (8) Tragedy moves us to feelings of pity and terror. It also awakens in us a sense of fear lest a like fate overtake us. (9) Because the outcome is inevitable it awakens in us a nobler emotion than that of pity for individuals — a spiritual sympathy with all human frailty and sorrow, and a more exalted emotion than that of ordinary fear, or terror — a sense of awe, a feeling of reverence. We see how petty, and selfish, and vain our views of life were. We go forth, all passion spent, chastened and uplifted. We find comfort and peace in bowing to the decree of providence or of destiny.

2. Between tragedy and comedy lies the *Reconciling Drama* or *Romantic Play*. (1) The motives animating the central characters are serious and vital and the parties are ranged for conflict, but the uncompromising individuals are thwarted by others possessed of good humor and common sense. (2) The disaster is averted. (3) The vicious are punished or rebuked and the virtuous rewarded. — *The Merchant of Venice* is an example of the more serious drama of reconcilement; *The Tempest* of the more romantic play of love.

3. In *Comedy Proper* the atmosphere is gay. There are no supreme moral issues, no heroic characters. The theme is of social complications; generally of love, to be sure, and its embarrassments, but also of whims, follies, humors, absurdities, accidents, misunderstandings, resulting in a temporary entanglement.

(1) Comedy Proper sets before us a picture of society as it is: of characters that are natural, even ordinary, but amusing because of their idiosyncrasies and diverse aims; of the customs of the day and the caprices and manners of individuals. (2) The play gives us pleasure rather because of its vivid imitation of characters than because of any sensational surprise or thrill of plot, that is, of action. (3) The spectator may not know how the complication is to be disentangled, but he is confident that it will be, and happily. (4) He has a foreknowledge of most of the misunderstandings and is generally taken into the secret of the practical jokes. This knowledge gives him a sense of superiority over those who are embarrassed. He often feels as if he were playing the jokes himself. (5) The dénouement, or unravelling of the complication, is often unexpected. It should be natural, but it is not always devised so carefully as the catastrophe in a tragedy. (6) The spectator does not pity those who are in difficulties, because the situations may change or the characters look at things differently. Both are probably ludicrous. The spectator is moved to mirth — the opposite of the pity awakened by tragedy. Or, better still, to mirth mingled with fellow-feeling, — which is humor. He has no sense of fear, as in tragedy, but of hope, of confidence in a happy outcome. (7) In comedy the hero succeeds; he asserts himself.

Those who are shamming or shifty or pretentious are held up to ridicule. (8) Comedy shows us that life is more amusing than we thought. It shows that vain pretensions are not finally successful, and that our mistakes and failures are not necessarily fatal. (9) Comedy is more colloquial than tragedy and less frequently written in verse.

Comedy Proper deals with characters, situations, and manners. *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night* blend all three but emphasize the characters. The *Comedy of Errors* lays the stress on situations; the *School for Scandal*, on manners. Such comedies are reasonable: they do not exist solely for the purpose of stirring empty sensations, and provoking laughter. They portray life.

4. *Farce* is stuffed with ridiculous situations and whims, and cares not how improbable the complication may be, provided the spectators explode in loud guffaws.

5. *Melodrama* is a sensational kind of dramatic romance which introduces music. It arouses violent emotions, but the motives are insufficient and the plot is improbable.

6. *The Masque* is dramatic in form and method, but the interest usually lies in spectacular effect. In former days, the characters were masked shepherds, shepherdesses, and supernatural beings, who sang and danced. Mythology and allegory are freely used. The masques of Ben Jonson and Fletcher are poetic. But the noblest, most sincerely moral, and dramatic of masques is Milton's *Comus*.

33. Didactic Poetry, or Versified Thought. — Not all literature written in verse is poetry. Sometimes it is merely versified thought. Poetry fires the imagination and moves the feelings. It delights us with beauty. When the writer aims to communicate information, to convey a moral or to change our views about personal, social, and political affairs, he is didactic: he is teaching. Even though he may be writing in verse, he is not writing poetry. Such literature may be artistic, but only too often it is practical or scientific.

Some works in verse are on the border between poetry and practical literature: (1) *Satire* attacks individuals or social and political follies and vices, sometimes with the purpose of reforming them, but always with ridicule. It is poetic only when

it provokes us not to mockery and bitterness but to happy laughter; when it stirs the creative imagination and gives us unselfish delight. In so far as it does this, the *Rape of the Lock*, a Social Satire, is poetry. Personal Satire, on the other hand, such as Pope's *Dunciad* or Byron's *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, and Political Satire, such as Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel*, do not aim to give us poetic delight but to make us despise the persons ridiculed. They use verse form to sharpen the sting. They are didactic verse, or versified thought, rather than poetry. (2) Some *Reflective Poems*, like Pope's *Essay on Man*, which is almost altogether moralizing and rhetorical, are versified thought. Large portions of Wordsworth's *Excursion* are purely didactic. Only when the reflection is imaginative, and productive of emotional delight, is the *Excursion* poetry.

X. THE JUDGMENT OF POETRY

There are many tests of poetry. Only a few can be considered here.

34. The Supremely Poetic Line. — Matthew Arnold has suggested that in order to judge of the merit of a poet we should compare his best lines or passages with those of the great masters of poetry, — that is to say, with lines in which men have agreed to recognize "high poetic quality." This is, no doubt, a useful test. He gives us examples of these "best-of-all lines" from poets of the highest repute, and shows us how they may be used as *touchstones* to determine whether or not the work of less recognized poets is pure gold. Unfortunately, he gives us no reason for his choice of "best-of-all lines," other than that they have the "mark" of high beauty, truth, and power. But exactly what that "mark" is, he does not explain. The only way to discover what the "mark" is would be to examine Arnold's examples of it and determine what characteristics of "high poetic quality" they have in common.

But first let us think for ourselves for a moment. Have we not all from time to time recognized a line as "best-of-all" although we may not have stayed to ask *why* it was "best"? Have we not sometimes in reading poetry come across a line or a passage that appeared to be strangely familiar at first sight,

and have we not said, " I have had a sense of that truth all my life, but somehow I have never grasped the full meaning of it, nor have I heard any one express its worth and beauty until now "? Have we not all felt " the strangely moving power of passages in certain poems "? Did they not push open a door and " steal into our hearts and thrill them with the mystery of fact, the wildness and the pang," and the fulness and beauty of life? Such passages, as William James has said, make " poetry alive and significant for us."

It is just such lines or passages that Arnold selects as " best-of-all." And the reason for his choice is (1) that they touch a chord in the heart of every one and set it a-quivering, and (2) that they suggest to the mind the whole truth about some fact or phase or ideal of life that had seemed beyond the power of words to express, and (3) that they express the truth in words that are precisely adequate to the meaning and are rhythmically and musically appropriate to the emotion. Such lines of inevitable poetry Arnold uses as touchstones.

One of Arnold's touchstones is the passage from *Paradise Lost*, in which Satan, defying the Almighty, says, " All is not lost; the unconquerable will " remains —

> And courage never to submit or yield,
> And what is else not to be overcome.

In this passage the " unconquerable will " lives for us in the two lines that immortalize the extremes to which Courage can go: courage that in defeat confesses it not; courage that in conflict cannot be defeated. Notice also how the sounds of the contrasting words match, — " courage " with " overcome," and " never " with " else."

Another of Arnold's touchstones is the famous passage in *Childe Harold* that tells how the dying gladiator in the Coliseum hears " the inhuman shout " of the spectators, —

> He *heard* it, but he *heeded* not — his *eyes*
> Were with his *heart*, and *that* was *far away*, —

with his children by the Danube and their mother. But "he, their sire," is

> *Butchered* to make a *Roman holiday*.

In the preceding stanza occurs another of these passages of supreme poetic merit, —

his *manly* brow
Consents to death but *conquers agony*.

The words italicized in the examples above are expressive of the contrasts that bring to our hearts the meaning of the crisis. They also heighten by the melody or the harmony of their sounds the appeal to our emotions. Such lines express a significant and thrilling thought in its aspects most opposed and yet most vital; and they express it in the affecting, imaginative, balanced, and rhythmical form appropriate to the thought as a whole. Sometimes the supremely poetic line presents but one of the opposing aspects of the crisis and a glimpse of the whole. But the glimpse is sufficient to give us a vision of the truth. These are the " marks " of poetic truth, beauty, and power, that characterize Arnold's touchstones.

Many such lines the student will discover with delight in the poems included in this volume. For instance: In Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey*, the passages beginning, " The still sad music of humanity "; " And I have felt a presence," " His little nameless unremembered acts "; in Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale*, the stanza beginning, " Thou wast not born for death "; in his *Grecian Urn*, the stanza beginning, " Heard melodies are sweet," and the lines opening, " Beauty is truth, truth beauty "; in Shelley's *To a Skylark*, " We look before and after "; in Tennyson's *Break, Break, Break*, " But O for the touch "; in his *In Memoriam*, " Our little systems have their day "; — in Coleridge, " He prayeth best who loveth best."

Examples might be multiplied. If the student should make a voyage of discovery through the later poems in this volume he will apprehend at least one of the reasons for the inclusion of some of them.

35. The Worth of the Poem as a Whole. — The value of a poem cannot be determined solely by the presence of supremely poetic passages. The value depends upon the worth of the imaginative view of life presented by the poem as a whole. There are two methods by which the poet may present his view:

(1) by *interpreting* life in terms of his own experience; (2) by *creating* an image of it and letting us draw our own conclusions concerning the meaning from the objects, events, and characters that he sets before us.

1. *Interpretative Poetry.* If the writer contents himself with presenting his personal emotion, his mood in a particular crisis, and the aspects of nature or human life that appealed to that personal mood, his poem, no matter how imaginative and beautiful, will not furnish a wise and impartial interpretation of life. He is thinking too much about himself or about the characters through whom he has expressed his intense but fleeting passion. Shelley's *Lines to an Indian Air*, — opening,

> I arise from dreams of thee
> In the first sweet sleep of night,

and closing,

> O lift me from the grass!
> I die, I faint, I fail!
> Let thy love in kisses rain
> On my lips and eyelids pale! —

is a lyric of the *personally emotional* kind. It is rapturous and imaginatively beautiful, but it is not a profound interpretation of what life means. Many lyric poems are of this nature.

If, however, the poet presents in a more impersonal way his emotions or those of characters whom he has imagined, — if he reflects upon the crisis and the emotions that it has awakened and shows that they are of vital interest to mankind, — his poem is an *interpretation of life.* (1) It has universal and ideal worth. (2) It has the distinctive mark of poetic truth. Shelley's *Adonais*, Milton's *Lycidas*, Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey* and his *Ode on Immortality* are poems of this nature. Self has passed out of sight and life has found a spiritual interpreter, a Seer.

2. *Creative Poetry.* If the poet presents a view of life by means of persons whom he has imagined — living out their own lives and speaking for themselves — his method, if properly handled, is creative. But not all narrative poems and dramas are genuinely creative. If the representation of nature and human life should be a mere "working over" of actual experi-

ence or of history it would have no imaginative worth. If it should readjust and reshape life so as to produce individuals and events that stir the imagination and emotion, but lack probability, the representation would have no moral or ideal worth. If it should fill up a plot with imagined characters that are mere stock-in-trade types built to suit some outworn stage convention, — such as the type of the ranting, roaring Irishman or the traditional money-lender or the heavy villain, — or if it should cater to some passing fashion or taste of the day, the representation would have no novel or original worth. All such representations are borrowed or, at the best, *reconstructive ;* they have no creative value.

The poet whose representation of life furnishes a vision of its worth does not merely reproduce, or falsely or uselessly reconstruct. (1) Like Chaucer, he shows us not all that the actual object or character or event was, but what it is to him, or might be. (2) He gives us by a few master-strokes the impression which nature made upon him. (3) He combines characteristic particulars so as to reproduce no one definite original but to *create an image* of the ideas or qualities that he wishes to portray. If the student reads Browning's *Andrea del Sarto*, he will see that Andrea's Madonnas failed of perfection because he painted them directly from his model — his wife — without idealizing her. Shakespeare does not derive his Brutus wholly from the historical personage of that name, but from that personage and others who possessed, or might have possessed, similar spirit or qualities. Shakespeare selects, reorders, combines, — creates that which is more than a duplicate of nature: a living thing. The Creative Poet imagines events and characters that are true to life, and worth while in themselves. By means of such characters the creative poet presents a view of life that is probable and convincing.

3. *Poetry : Interpretative and Creative.* It is evident, then, (1) that the interpretative poem has higher worth as a whole than the poem of personal emotion; and (2) that the creative poem has higher worth than the poem that merely reconstructs the materials of nature and human life. (3) When the poet is at his best he at one and the same time interprets the signif-

icance of life in its broad, enduring, and spiritual aspect, and creates characters that live the life. He is Interpreter, or Seer, and also Maker. He sends forth his characters as realities to move up and down among us. They show us what life means in the light of the universal and the ideal.

36. **The Degree of Acceptance.** — To satisfy the tests already mentioned, a poem must have truth to life, worth for life, creative beauty, and power to awaken the nobler emotions. (1) A poem is successful in proportion to the degree in which it possesses each and all of these qualities. (2) The power to stir the nobler emotions is the quality that brings a poem to the hearts of mankind. (3) A poem cannot have that quality unless it have also poetic truth, worth, and beauty. (4) If, with these other qualities, it have poetic power in high degree and of wide appeal, not for one coterie or crowd alone, nor for its own country alone, but for all who speak the tongue in which it is written, it is a *great* poem. (5) If it have this appeal for men of many climes and many tongues it may be regarded as a classic by its author's own generation. But (6) a *Classic* is a poem whose position is above dispute, and its position cannot be above dispute until it has stood the test of time. No poem can be safely called a classic in its own generation, for as the generations pass "the old order changeth yielding place to new." With the changing view of life literary tastes and fashions change. (7) The Classic is not the interpreter of one good custom or the favorite of one age; it is a poem that has held the homage of mankind through generations of thought and taste dissimilar to, or opposed to, its own, — through at least one such generation. A classic has a meaning both real and exalted, a creative beauty, a power to move men that is universal, a place that endures. — The dramas of Æschylus and Sophocles and Shakespeare, the epics of Homer and Vergil, Dante and Milton, the comedies of Molière, are classics. So also, we may safely assert, are the poems of Wordsworth and Coleridge, of Byron, Shelley, and Keats, of Tennyson and Browning, and of others, dead but a generation or two or three, who are represented in this volume.

CHARLES MILLS GAYLEY.

ENGLISH POETRY

PROGRESS AND MASTERPIECES

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BASIS

THE ORIGINS OF THE LANGUAGE

BEFORE we enter upon the study of modern English poetry it will be wise to consider briefly the language in which that poetry is written. As we shall see, it is a language composed of elements which have been added one after another, as one race after another has conquered upon British soil. We shall attempt merely to enumerate these conquests, leaving the student to fill in the story from his study of English history or the history of English literature.

1. **The Celts and the Romans.** — In the early westward migration of the races, the Celts made their way as far as the British Isles, and several centuries before the beginning of the Christian era had obtained entire possession of the country. In 54 and 55 B.C. the Romans under Julius Cæsar made two unavailing expeditions into Britain. A century later, in their career of Western conquest, they gained a military supremacy over the Celts, at least in the southern and more accessible portions of the island, and to some extent civilized the original inhabitants. But direct traces of early Celt and early Roman do not abound in our language, though the Celtic element, as we shall find, has had no slight influence in providing theme and spirit for English poetry.

2. **The Teutons (Anglo-Saxons).** — When the Roman troops were called home, about 400 A.D., to defend the imperial city from the attacks of Teutonic invaders, the Celtic tribes in the north and west of Britain, taking advantage of the defenceless condition of the weaker Celts of the south, swooped down upon them and threatened to overrun the country. In their extremity the southern Celts called to their

aid the Teutonic tribes dwelling upon the easterly shore of the North Sea, south and southwest of Denmark. But these new allies, having performed the task assigned to them, went on to take the country for themselves; after nearly four centuries of conquest they gained complete ascendency, killing many of the original inhabitants of the island and pushing others into Cornwall, Wales, and Scotland. During the earlier portion of this struggle, probably in the sixth century A.D., lived the original of the legendary Celtic king, Arthur, — a British hero destined to play no small part in future English poetry. The principal tribes of the Teutonic invaders were the Angles and the Saxons, from the former of whom are derived the present names of the country and of the language. This language, in its earlier form, was developed by the West Saxons, the finally dominant tribe, and in that earlier form is now denominated "Anglo-Saxon." It was the language of nearly all England for six hundred years, from the beginning of the fifth through the end of the tenth century. In the early part of this period the Anglo-Saxons were christianized, an event which not only added several hundred Latin words to the language, but also largely influenced Anglo-Saxon poetry. The famous Anglo-Saxon epic of *Beowulf*, a story of heroes and dragons, was composed while our ancestors were yet pagans. Their first great Christian poem was a paraphrase of biblical history, composed by Cædmon in the second half of the seventh century.

3. **The Northmen.** — During the ninth and tenth centuries certain Danish tribes — the Northmen, or Norsemen — gradually gained a foothold in England; and in the early part of the eleventh century they attained such strength that there was a short period of Danish rule. The consequent mingling of the Scandinavian tongue with the Anglo-Saxon no doubt modified the latter to a considerable extent, particularly as regards the spoken language. The fact, however, that both races were Teutonic makes it difficult to determine how great this influence really was. But a very important Norse influence was soon to enter by another channel. Upon the people of Gaul (France), originally Celtic, the Romans had imposed not only military rule, but also the fashion of the Latin tongue. This Latin speech continued to be the basic language of the French, though modified (1) by traces of the original Celtic tongue; (2) by the language of the Franks, — a Teutonic people who overran France and gave their name to the country about the time that the Anglo-Saxons were overrunning England; and (3) by the Northmen of whom we have spoken above. The onslaught of these last invaders was so success-

ful that about 900 A.D. the French ceded to them a large tract of country in Northern France, which they called Normandy. They soon adopted the religion and the language of the Franks. The latter, however, was modified by contact with the native speech of the Northern conquerors.

4. **The Norman French.** — These Norman French, as the people of Normandy were called, having invaded England in 1066 A.D., succeeded in overthrowing the Anglo-Saxons at the momentous battle of Hastings, and in establishing dominion over the country. For nearly three centuries after this time there is displayed the singular spectacle of two great languages existing side by side in the same small island, neither of them very materially affected by the other. To the Anglo-Saxon, or English, the great body of the common people stubbornly held. The Norman French, on the other hand, was the language of the court, the nobility, the schools, the churches, and, to a large extent, of literature.[1] During the first hundred and fifty years after the conquest, English almost ceased to exist as a written language, since most of the poetry and much of the prose was the work of the Normans. By slow degrees, however, the Normans severed their connection with their original home on the continent and coalesced with the Saxon element of the island. By the end of the thirteenth century there were consequently evolved, in various parts of Britain, various Anglo-Norman dialects, from which our present language was destined to spring. Though we cannot discuss the matter here at any length, we may briefly say that in the composite language thus formed the grammar and the more familiar words are Anglo-Saxon, but the less common words are Norman French, — that is, the Latin of Gaul as modified successively by Teutonic influences, first Frankish and then Norse.[2]

Summary. — This brings the story down to the beginning of the fourteenth century, the century which witnessed the first flowering of our modern literature. We have seen that the language in which

[1] Of course, no small proportion of the theological, scientific, and romantic writing of the time was in Latin; and this undoubtedly affected the spirit of our literature. But we are referring above especially to the development of the language; and upon this the influence of Latin has always been indirect rather than direct.

[2] This discussion has sketched the growth of our language only to the end of the thirteenth century. Since that time the language has been greatly enlarged, but this enlargement is due, not to immigrations and conquests on the part of alien races, but to the new words brought in from other tongues by travel, by commercial and social intercourse with other lands, by inventions and discoveries, by new subjects and forms of thought, — in short, by the general growth and development of the people.

this literature finds expression is a compound of an Anglo-Saxon or Teutonic element, and a Norman French or Latin element. Though the language has derived about the same number of words from each of these sources, we can readily understand why the Anglo-Saxon forms much the larger portion of any author's vocabulary; for its words denote the commoner objects of experience and relations of thought. We have also seen how it came about that the Celts, the original occupants of Britain, now have their abode in the mountains of Wales and Scotland, in the peninsula of Cornwall, and in Ireland and the smaller adjoining islands, where, though they have had but little influence upon our language as a language, they have done much toward influencing the literature which it is a mission of that language to express. Finally, we have seen that the English nation, like the English language, is a composite, and can understand that the commingling of races in the "long period before the outburst of literature in the fourteenth century, was an important element in the unconscious preparation for the later time." The admixture of racial characteristics in this period of growth has contributed much to the determination of qualities peculiar to all subsequent English poetry.

Notes for Further Study. — For the *Beowulf*, see translations by F. B. Gummere (The Oldest English Epic. Macmillan), J. L. Hall (Heath & Co.), C. G. Child (Riverside Lit. Series); for the study of Cædmon see Bede's Ecclesiastical History, Book IV, chap. 24 (Temple Classics or Bohn's Antiquarian Library). Selections from the *Beowulf* and other Anglo-Saxon poems are contained in Cook and Tinker's very convenient Translations from Old English Poetry (Ginn & Co.) and the chapter in Bede may be found in the same authors' companion volume on Old English Prose (Ginn & Co.).

The following verses by Cædmon, translated by Professor Cook, are "probably the first piece of extant English literature composed on English soil, or at least they are the first that can be approximately dated":

> Now must we hymn the Master of heaven,
> The might of the Maker, the deeds of the Father,
> The thought of His heart. He, Lord everlasting,
> Established of old the source of all wonders:
> Creator all-holy, He hung the bright heaven,
> A roof high upreared, o'er the children of men;
> The King of mankind then created for mortals
> The world in its beauty, the earth spread beneath them,
> He, Lord everlasting, omnipotent God.

CHAPTER II

THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LANGUAGE AND THE BEGINNING OF THE LITERATURE

THE fourteenth century has been fitly called the most important epoch in the intellectual history of Europe. It was the century in which decaying feudalism began to give way under the pressure of a new social order. It was the century of the distinctively modern Italian writers, Petrarch and Boccaccio, the most notable representatives of a literature which has in manifold ways stimulated the mind of England to a corresponding literary activity. It was during this century that English poets ceased to be mere copyists of a foreign school, and that a new and original native poetry arose. It was during this century, also, that out of the Babel of conflicting dialects the present English language won its way.

At the beginning of the fourteenth century our language was at a critical stage of its development. It was at least certain that the basis of the language would be Teutonic rather than Latin. Little by little the Norman French had been banished from the schools, from the churches, from the law courts, from society; but as yet no national English language had come forward to take its place. Different dialects were spoken in different portions of the country — the Southern, the Midland, and the Northern English, the last of which was the parent of the modern Lowland Scotch, the tongue of Ayrshire and of Burns. In course of time, however, the English spoken in the eastern part of the Midland district, — the language of Oxford and Cambridge, of London and the Court, — drew to the front and attained a supremacy which it has never lost. One of the most potent agencies in fixing this dialect as the English of to-day was the use made of it in fourteenth-century literature, — by John Wycliff in his translation of the Bible, and by him whom many delight to honor as "the father of English poetry," GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

Contemporaneous with Chaucer were two other fourteenth-century poets, who deserve at least to be mentioned. WILLIAM LANGLAND (1332–1400) was more than an ordinary poet, though

he belongs, in both the thought and form of his poetry, to the age which was passing, rather than to the age in which he lived. Far greater in his influence upon succeeding poetry was JOHN GOWER (1330?–1408), a scholarly, if somewhat prosaic, individual, who, writing in the same dialect and dealing with the same themes as his distinguished friend Chaucer, served with him as a "fellow schoolmaster in bringing England to literature." But however interesting from an historical point of view, neither Langland nor Gower can for a moment be compared with Chaucer himself, who stands out easily as the first true artist in English poetry.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER (1340?–1400)

It is a noteworthy fact that Chaucer, by two centuries the earliest of our greater English poets, is, at the same time, one of the greatest of *all* English poets: for critics unite in giving him a place among the five or six princes of our literature. His skill in the use of language, his sympathy with nature, his genial humor and keen insight, his intimate knowledge of men and things, his genius in the delineation of character, his delightful freshness and originality of view, — these particular qualities have perhaps never since been so happily joined in any one English poet except Shakespeare himself. Yet, interesting as we feel the man to be, and unremittingly as students have endeavored to recover the facts of his life, it must be confessed that our absolute information regarding him is unhappily limited.

1340?–1372. — Chaucer was born about 1340, in London, his father being a vintner, or wine seller, in fairly easy circumstances. We know nothing of the boy's early education, or, indeed, anything at all about him, until 1357, when we find him acting as a page in the household of the Duke of Clarence, third son of Edward III. He took part, as one of the duke's retinue, in a military expedition into France, where, in 1360, he was for a short time prisoner. For several years after this date all trace of him is again lost; but in 1367 we find him installed as a valet of the King's Chamber, an office which he had doubtless been holding for some time and which he continued to hold till 1372. During this period he commenced to write verse, and produced the *Compleynte unto Pitie* and the *Boke of the Duchesse*, both of which appeared before 1370, and, in the opinion of most critics, show traces of French influence. About this time his marriage took place; just when is uncertain, but, at any rate, sometime between 1366 and 1374. We also know that he had at least one child.

1372–1386. — In 1372, when thirty-two years of age, Chaucer was sent on a diplomatic mission to Italy; there he became acquainted with the writings of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio. This journey and its results are of vital importance, both to Chaucer and to English poetry. It was at this point that our literature was first affected by the dominant influence of Italy; and it was by this same influence that the growing powers of our first real poet were strengthened and directed. During this period many of his best poems were written, — among others, the *Hous of Fame*, the *Legende of Good Women*, and the *Troilus and Criseyde*. During this period, also, the poet was very active in the affairs of the world. We hear of him as, successively, Comptroller of Customs, Ambassador on various foreign missions, and, finally, Member of Parliament for Kent. Few makers of English literature have been so prominent in public activities.

1386–1400. — Near the close of 1386, a change in political fortunes brought to Chaucer the loss of his offices and reduced him suddenly from affluence to comparative poverty. In this period of enforced leisure the plan of *The Canterbury Tales* seems to have shaped itself in his mind; and between 1387 and 1390 were probably written not only the *Prologue*, but also the best and largest portion of the *Tales*. The last ten years of Chaucer's life were the least productive of literary result. The *Tales*, which he had planned on a splendid scale, were not yet one-fifth completed; yet he added only three between 1390 and 1400. Sometimes he was in comfortable circumstances; more often in want and dependent upon the bounty of the king. In the latter part of 1400 the kindly poet and noble-hearted gentleman died. He was the first of English poets to be honored by burial in Westminster Abbey.

Though most of Chaucer's effort was directed to the telling of stories, a task in which he succeeded so well that Stopford Brooke pronounces him "our greatest story-teller in verse," still most readers of to-day would undoubtedly prefer to even the best of his stories, that wonderful gallery of fourteenth-century portraits known as the *Prologue* to the *Canterbury Tales*. Of this one critic has gone so far as to say, "There is no writing like that of the *Prologue* in all English literature, save in Shakespeare." And, indeed, in its freshness and beauty and the vivid colors of its "lively portraiture," it takes rank with the very best of its kind. Aside from the *Prologue* the student will probably find the *Knightes Tale* and the *Nonne Preestes Tale* of greatest interest.

THE PROLOGUE TO THE CANTERBURY TALES

Here biginneth the Book of the Tales of Caunterbury

N.B. — In Chaucer there are as many syllables as there are vowels or diphthongs, except when the vowel or diphthong is elided or suppressed. These elisions or suppressions, which happen very frequently in the case of *e* and occasionally of other vowels, are marked in this text by *italics*.

The influences of the breezy April

WHAN that Aprílle with his shoures sote
The droghte of Marche hath perced to the rote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licóur,
Of which vertú engendred is the flour;
Whan Zephirus eek with his swete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his halfe cours y-ronne,
And smale fowles maken melodyë,
That slepen al the night with open yë,
(So priketh hem natúre in hir coráges):
Than longen folk to goon on pilgrimages
(And palmers for to seken straunge strondes)
To ferne halwes, couthe in sondry londes;
And speciálly, from every shires ende
Of Engelond, to Caunterbury they wende,
The holy blisful martir for to seke,
That hem hath holpen, whan that they were seke

The arrangement for a pilgrimage to be made in company

Bifel that, in that seson on a day,
In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay

Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage
To Caunterbury with ful devout corage,
At night was come in-to that hostelryë
Wel nyne and twenty in a companyë,
Of sondry folk, by áventure y-falle
In felawshipe, and pilgrims were they alle,
That tóward Caunterbury wolden ryde;
The chambres and the stables weren wyde,
And wel we weren esed atte beste.
And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,
So hadde I spoken with hem everichon,
That I was of hir felawshipe anon,
And made forward erly for to ryse,
To take our wey, ther as I yow devyse.

An introduction to the character sketches that follow

But natheles, whyl I have tyme and space,
Er that I ferther in this tale pace,
Me thinketh it acordaunt to resóun,
To telle yow al the condicióun
Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,
And whiche they weren, and of what degree;
And eek in what array that they were inne:
And at a knight than wol I first biginne.

The Knight

A KNIGHT ther was, and that a worthy man,
That fro the tyme that he first bigan
To ryden out, he loved chivalryë,
Trouthe and honóur, fredóm and curteisyë.
Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre,
And therto [illegible]he riden (no man ferre)
As wel in Cristendóm as in héthenésse,
And ever honóured for his worthinesse.
At Alisaundre he was, whan it was wonne;
Ful ofte [illegible] hadde the bord bigonne
Aboven alle naciouns in Pruce.

In Lettow hadde he reysed and in Ruce,
No Cristen man so ofte of his degree.
In Gernade at the sege eek hadde he be
Of Algezir, and riden in Belmaryë.
At Lyeys was he, and at Satalyë,
Whan they were wonne; and in the Grete See
At many a noble aryve hadde he be.
At mortal batailles hadde he been fiftene,
And foghten for our feith at Tramissene
In listes thryës, and ay slayn his fo.
This ilke worthy knight had been also
Somtyme with the lord of Palatyë,
Ageyn another hethen in Turkyë:
And evermore he hadde a sovereyn prys.
And thogh that he were worthy, he was wys,
And of his port as meke as is a mayde.
He never yet no vileinye ne sayde
In al his lyf, un-to no maner wight.
He was a verray parfit gentil knight.
But for to tellen yow of his array,
His hors were góde, but hé ne was nat gay.
Of fustian he wered a gipóun
Ál bismótered with his habergeoun;
For he was late y-come from his viage,
And wente for to doon his pilgrimage.

The Squyer

With him ther was his sone, a yong SQUYÉR,
A lovyere, and a lusty bachelér,
With lokkes crulle, as they were leyd in presse.
Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.
Of his statúre he was of evene lengthe,
And wonderly deliver, and greet of strengthe.
And he had been somtyme in chivachyë,
In Flaundres, in Artoys, and Picardyë,
And born him wel, as of so litel space,
In hope to stonden in his lady grace.

Embrouded was he, as it were a mede
Al ful of fresshe floures, whyte and rede.
Singinge he was, or floytinge, al the day;
He was as fresh as is the month of May.
Short was his goune, with sleves longe and wyde.
Wel coude he sitte on hors, and faire ryde.
He coude songes make and wel endyte,
Juste and eek daunce, and wel purtreye and wryte.
So hote he lovede, that by nightertale
He sleep na-more than dooth a nightingale.
Curteys he was, lowly, and servisáble,
And carf biforn his fader at the table.

The Yeman

A YEMAN hadde he, and serváunts na-mo
At that tyme, for him liste ryde so;
And he was clad in cote and hood of grene;
A sheef of pecok-arwes brighte and kene
Under his belt he bar ful thriftily,
(Wel coude he dresse his takel yemanly:
His arwes drouped noght with fetheres lowe),
And in his hand he bar a mighty bowe.
A not-heed hadde he, with a broun viság e.
Of wode-craft wel coude he al the uságe.
Upon his arm he bar a gay bracér,
And by his syde a swerd and a bokelér,
And on that other syde a gay daggére
Harnéised wel, and sharp as point of spere;
A Cristofre on his brest of silver shene.
An horn he bar, the bawdrik was of grene;
A forster was he, soothly, as I gesse.

The Prioresse

Ther was also a Nonne, a PRIORESSE,
That of hir smyling was ful symple and coy;
Hir gretteste ooth was but by sëynt Loy;
And she was cleped madame Eglentyne.

Ful wel she song the servicë divyne,
Entuned in hir nose ful semely;
And Frensh she spak ful faire and fetisly,
After the scole of Stratford-atte-Bowe,
For Frensh of Paris was to hir unknowe.
At mete wel y-taught was she with-alle;
She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle,
Ne wette hir fingres in hir sauce depe.
Wel coude she carie a morsel, and wel kepe
Thát no dróp ne fille up-on hir brest.
In curteisye was set ful moche hir lest.
Hir over lippe wyped she so clene,
That in hir coppe was no ferthing sene
Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir draughte.
Ful semely after hir mete she raughte,
And sikerly she was of greet desport,
And ful plesaunt, and amiáble of port,
And peyned hir to countrefete chere
Of court, and been estatlich of manére,
And to ben holden digne of reverence.
But, for to speken óf hir conscience,
She was so charitáble and so pitóus,
She wolde wepe, if that she sawe a mous
Caught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde.
Of smale houndes had she, that she fedde
With rosted flesh, or milk and wastel-breed
But sore wepte she if oon of hem were deed,
Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte:
And al was conscience and tendre herte.
Ful semely hir wimple pinched was;
Hir nose tretýs; hir eyen greye as glas;
Hir mouth ful smal, and ther-to softe and reed;
But sikerly she hadde a fair forheed;
It was almost a spanne brood, I trowe;
For, hardily, she was nat undergrowe.
Ful fetis was hir cloke, as I was war.
Of smal corál aboute hir arm she bar
A peire of bedes, gauded al with grene;

And ther-on heng a broche of gold ful shene,
On which ther was first write a crowned A,
And after, *Amor vincit omnia.*

The Nonne and the three Preestes

Another NONNE with hir hadde she,
That was hir chapeleyne, and PREESTES three.

The Monk

A MONK ther was, a fair for the maistryë,
An out-rydére, that lovede veneryë;
A manly man, to been an abbot able.
Ful many a deyntee hors hadde he in stable:
And, whan he rood, men mighte his brydel here
Gínglen in a whistling wind as clere,
And eek as loude as dooth the chapel-belle,
Ther as this lord was keper of the celle.
The reule of seint Maure or of seint Benéit,
By-cause that it was olde and som-del streit,
This ilke monk leet olde thinges pace,
And heeld after the newe world the space.
He yaf nat of that text a pulled hen,
That seith that hunters been nat holy men;
Ne that a monk, whan he is recchelees,
Is lykned til a fish that *is* waterlees;
This is to seyn, a monk out of his cloistre.
But thilke text held he nat worth an oistre;
And I seyde, his opinioun was good.
What sholde he studie, and make him-selven wood,
Upon a book in cloistre alwey to poure,
Or swinken with his handes, and labóure,
As Austin bit? How shal the world be served?
Lat Austin have his swink to him reserved.
Therfore he was a pricasour aright;
Grehoundes he hadde, as swifte as fowel in flight;
Of priking and of hunting for the hare
Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare.

I seigh his sleves purfíled at the hond
With grys, and that the fyneste of a lond;
And, for to festne his hood under his chin,
He hadde of gold y-wroght a curious pin:
A love-knotte in the gretter ende ther was.
His heed was balled, that shoon as any glas,
And eek his face, as he had been anoint.
He was a lord ful fat and in good point;
His eyën stepe, and rollinge in his heed,
That stemed as a forneys of a leed;
His botes souple, his hors in greet estat.
Now certeinly he was a fair prelát;
He was nat pale as a for-pyned goost.
A fat swan loved he best of any roost.
His palfry was as broun as is a berye.

The Frere

A Frere ther was, a wantown and a merye,
A limitour, a ful solempne man.
In alle the ordres foure is noon that can
So moche of daliaunce and fair langage.
He hadde maad ful many a mariage
Of yonge wommen, at his owene cost.
Un-to his ordre he was a noble post.
Ful wel biloved and fámuliér was he
With frankeleyns over-al in his contree,
And eek with worthy wommen of the toun:
For he had powër of confessióun,
As seyde him-self, more than a curát,
For of his ordre he was licentiat.
Ful swetely herde he confessióun,
And pleasaunt was his absolúcióun;
He was an esy man to yeve penáunce
Ther as he wiste to han a good pitáunce;
For unto a poure ordre for to yive
Is signe that a man is wel y-shrive.
For if he yaf, he dorste make avaunt,
He wiste that a man was repentaunt.

For many a man so hard is of his herte,
He may nat wepe al-thogh him sore smerte.
Therfore, in stede of weping and preyéres,
Men moot yeve silver to the poure freres.
His tipet was ay farsed ful of knyves
And pinnes, for to yeven faire wyves.
And certeinly he hadde a mery note;
Wel coude he singe and pleyen on a rote.
Of yeddinges he bar outrely the prys.
His nekke whyt was as the flour-de-lys;
Ther-to he strong was as a champioun.
He knew the tavernes wel in every toun,
And everich hostiler and tappestere
Bet than a lazar or a beggestere;
For un-to swich a worthy man as he
Acorded nat, as by his facultee,
To have with seke lazars aqueyntaunce.
It is nat honest, it may nat avaunce
For to delen with no swich poraille,
But al with riche and sellers of vitaille.
And over-al, ther as profit sholde aryse,
Curteys he was, and lowly of servyse;
Ther nas no man no-wher so vertuous.
He was the beste beggere in his hous;
For thogh a widwe hadde noght a sho,
So pleasaunt was his "*In principio*,"
Yet wolde he have a ferthing, er he wente.
His purchas was wel bettre than his rente.
And rage he coude, as it were right a whelpe.
In love-dayes ther coude he muchel helpe;
For there he was nat lyk a cloisterer,
With a thredbar cope, as is a poure scolér,
But he was lyk a maister or a pope.
Of double worsted was his semi-cope,
That rounded as a belle out of the presse.
Somwhat he lipsed, for his wantownesse,
To make his English swete up-on his tonge;
And in his harping, whan that he had songe,

His eyën twinkled in his heed aright,
As doon the sterres in the frosty night.
This worthy limitour was cleped Hubérd.

The Marchant

A Marchant was ther with a forked berd,
In mottelee, and hye on horse he sat,
Up-on his heed a Flaundrish bevere hat;
His botes clasped faire and fetisly.
His resons he spak ful solempnely,
Souninge alway thencrees of his winníng.
He wolde the see were kept for any thing
Bitwixe Middelburgh and Orewelle.
Wel coude he in eschaunge sheeldes selle.
This worthy man ful wel his wit bisette;
Ther wiste no wight that he was in dette,
So estatly was he of his governaunce,
With his bargaynes, and with his chevisaunce.
For sothe he was a worthy man with-alle,
But sooth to seyn, I noot how men him calle.

The Clerk of Oxenford

A Clerk ther was of Oxenford also,
That un-to logik hadde longe y-go.
As lene was his hors as is a rake,
And he nas nat right fat, I undertake;
But loked holwe, and ther-to soberly.
Ful thredbar was his overest courtepy;
For he had geten him yet no benefice,
Ne was so worldly for to have office.
For him was lever have at his beddes heed
Twénty bokes, clad in blak or reed,
Of Aristotle and his philosophyë,
Than robes riche, or fithel, or gay sautryë.
But al be that he was a philosóphre,
Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre;
But al that he mighte of his freendes hente,

On bokes and on lerninge he it spente,
And bisily gan for the soules preye
Of hem that yaf him wher-with to scoleye.
Of studie took he most cure and most hede.
Noght o word spak he more than was nede,
And that was seyd in forme, and reverence,
And short and quik, and ful of hy sentence.
Souninge in moral vertu was his speche,
And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche.

The Sergeant of the Lawe.

A Sergeant of the Lawe, war and wys,
That often hadde been at the parvys,
Ther was alsó, ful riche of excellence.
Discreet he was, and of greet reverence:
He semed swich, his wordes weren so wyse.
Justyce he was ful often in assyse,
By patente, and by pleyn commissioun;
For his science, and for his heigh renoun,
Of fees and robes hadde he many oon.
So greet a purchasour was no-wher noon.
Al was fee simple to him in effect,
His púrchasíng míghte nat beén infect.
No-wher so bisy a man as he ther nas,
And yet he semed bisier than he was.
In termes hadde he caas and domes alle,
That from the tyme of king Williám were falle.
Ther-to he coude endyte, and make a thing,
Ther coude no wight pinche at his wrytíng;
And every statut coude he pleyn by rote.
He rood but hoomly in a medlee cote
Girt with a ceint of silk, with barres smale;
Of his array telle I no lenger tale.

The Frankeleyn

A Frankeleyn was in his companyë;
Whyt was his berd, as is the dayës-yë.

Of his complexioun he was sangwýn.
Wel loved he by the morwe a sop in wyn.
To liven in delyt was ever his wone,
For he was Epicurus owene sone,
That heeld opinioun, that pleyn delyt
Was verraily felicitee parfyt.
An housholdére, and that a greet, was he;
Seint Julian he was in his contree.
His breed, his ale, was alwey after oon;
A bettre envyned man was no-wher noon.
With-oute bake mete was never his hous,
Of fish and flesh, and that so plentevous,
It snewed in his hous of mete and drinke,
Of alle deyntees that men coude thinke.
After the sondry sesons of the yeer,
So chaunged he his mete and his sopér.
Ful many a fat partrích hadde he in mewe,
And many a breem and many a luce in stewe.
Wo was his cook, but-if his sauce were
Poynaunt and sharp, and redy al his gere.
His table dormant in his halle alway
Stood redy covered al the longe day.
At sessiouns ther was he lord and sire;
Ful ofte tyme he was knight of the shire.
An anlas and a gipser al of silk
Heng at his girdel, whyt as morne milk.
A shirreve hadde he been, and a countour;
Was no-wher such a worthy vavasour. . . .

The Cook

A Cook they hadde with hem for the nones,
To boille the chiknes with the mary-bones
And poudre-marchant tart and galingale.
Wel coude he knowe a draughte of London ale.
He coude roste, and sethe, and broille, and fryë,
Máken mortreux, and wel bake a pyë.
But greet harm was it, as it thoughte me,
That on his shine a mormal hadde he;
For blankmangér, that made he with the beste.

The Shipman

A SHIPMAN was ther, woning fer by weste:
For aught I woot, he was of Dertemouthe.
He rood up-on a rouncy, as he couthe,
In a goune of falding to the knee.
A daggere hanging on a laas hadde he
Aboute his nekke under his arm adoun.
The hote somer had maad his hewe al broun;
And, certeinly, he was a good felawe.
Ful many a draughte of wyn had he y-drawe
From Burdeux-ward, whyl that the chapman sleep.
Of nyce conscience took he no keep.
If that he faught, and hadde the hyër hond,
By water he sente hem hoom to every lond.
But of his craft to rekene wel his tydes,
His stremes and his daungers him bisydes,
His herberwe and his mone, his lodemenage,
Ther nas noon swich from Hulle to Cartáge.
Hardy he was, and wys to undertake;
With many a tempest hadde his berd ben shake.
He knew wel alle the havenes, as they were,
From Gootlond to the cape of Finistere,
And every cryke in Britayne and in Spayne;
His barge y-cleped was the Maudelayne.

The Doctour of Phisyk

With us ther was a DOCTOUR OF PHISYK,
In al this world ne was ther noon him lyk,
To speke of phisik and of surgeryë;
For he was grounded in astronomyë.
He kepte his paciënt a ful greet del
In houres, by his magik naturel.
Wel coude he fortunen thë ascendënt
Of his imáges for his paciënt.
He knew the cause of everich maladyë,
Were it of hoot or cold, or moiste, or dryë,

And where engendred, and of what humóur;
He was a verrey parfit practisour.
The cause y knowe, and of his harm the rote,
Anon he yaf the seke man his bote.
Ful redy hadde he his apothecaries,
To sende him drogges and his letuaries,
For ech of hem made other for to winne;
Hir frendschipe nas nat newe to biginne.
Wel knew he the oldë Esculapius,
And Deïscorides, and eek Rufus,
Old Ypocras, Haly, and Galien;
Serapion, Razis, and Avicen;
Averrois, Dámascien, and Constantyn;
Bernard, and Gatesden, and Gilbertyn.
Of his diete mesurável was he,
For it was of no superfluitee,
But of greet norissing and digestíble.
His studie was but litel on the Bible.
In sangwin and in pers he clad was al,
Lyned with taffata and with sendál;
And yet he was but esy of dispence;
He kepte that he wan in pestilence.
For gold in phisik is a cordial,
Therfore he lovede gold in special.

The Wyf of Bathe

A good Wyf was ther of bisyde Bathe,
But she was som-del deef, and that was scathe.
Of clooth-makíng she hadde swiche an haunt,
She passed hem of Ypres and of Gaunt.
In al the parisshe wyf ne was ther noon
That to the offríng bifore hir sholde goon;
And if ther dide, certeyn, so wrooth was she,
That she was out of alle charitee.
Hir coverchiefs ful fyne were of ground;
I dorste swere they weyeden ten pound
That on a Sonday were upon hir heed.

Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed,
Ful streite y-teyd, and shoos ful moiste and newe.
Boold was hir face, and fair, and reed of hewe.
She was a worthy womman al hir lyve;
Housbondes at chirche-dore she hadde fyve,
Withouten other companye in youthe;
(But therof nedeth nat to speke as nouthe).
And thryës hadde she been at Jerusalem;
She hadde passed many a straunge streem;
At Rome she hadde been, and at Boloigne,
In Galice at seint Jame, and at Coloigne.
She coude muche of wandring by the weye.
Gat-tothed was she, soothly for to seye.
Up-on an amblere esily she sat,
Y-wimpled wel, and on hir heed an hat
As brood as is a bokeler or a targe;
A foot-mantél aboute hir hipes large,
And on hir feet a paire of spores sharpe.
In felawschip wel coude she laughe and carpe
Of remedyes of love she knew per-chaunce,
For she coude of that art the olde daunce.

The Poure Persoun

A good man was ther of religioun,
And was a poure PERSOUN of a toun;
But riche he was of holy thoght and werk.
He was also a lerned man, a clerk,
That Cristes gospel trewely wolde preche;
His parisshens devoutly wolde he teche.
Benigne he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversitee ful paciënt;
And swich he was y-preved ofte sythes.
Ful looth were him to cursen for his tythes,
But rather wolde he yeven, out of doute,
Un-to his poure parisshens aboute
Of his offring, and eek of his substáunce.
He coude in litel thing han suffisaunce.

Wyd was his parisshe, and houses fer a-sonder,
But he ne lafte nat, for reyn ne thonder,
In siknes nor in meschief, to visyte
The ferreste in his parisshe, muche and lyte,
Up-on his feet, and in his hand a staf.
This noble ensample to his sheep he yaf,
That first he wroghte, and afterward he taughte;
Out of the gospel he tho wordes caughte;
And this figúre he added eek ther-to,
That if gold ruste, what shal iren do?
For if a preest be foul, on whom we truste,
No wonder is a lewed man to ruste;
And shame it is, if a preest take keep,
A [dirty] shepherde and a clene sheep.
Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yive,
By his clennesse, how that his sheep shold live.
He sette nat his benefice to hyre,
And leet his sheep encombred in the myre,
And ran to London, un-to sëynt Poules,
To seken him a chaunterye for soules,
Or with a bretherheed to been withholde;
But dwelte at hoom, and kepte wel his folde,
So that the wolf ne made it nat miscarie;
He was a shepherde and no mercenarie.
And though he holy were, and vertuous,
He was to sinful man nat despitous,
Ne of his speche daungerous ne digne,
But in his teching díscreet and benigne.
To drawen folk to heven by fairnesse
By good ensample, was his bisinesse:
But it were any persone obstinat,
What-so he were, of heigh or lowe estat,
Him wolde he snibben sharply for the nones.
A bettre preest, I trowe that nowher noon is.
He wayted after no pompe and reverence,
Ne maked him a spyced conscience,
But Cristes lore, and his apostles twelve,
He taughte, and first he folwed it him-selve.

The Plowman

With him ther was a PLOWMAN, was his brother,
That hadde y-lad of dong ful many a fother,
A trewe swinker and a good was he,
Livinge in pees and parfit charitee.
God loved he best with al his hole herte
At alle tymes, thogh him gamed or smerte,
And thanne his neighebour right as him-selve.
He wolde thresshe, and ther-to dyke and delve,
For Cristes sake, for every poure wight,
Withouten hyre, if it lay in his might.
His tythes payëd he ful faire and wel,
Bothe of his propre swink and his catél.
In a tabárd he rood upon a mere.

The Remaining Characters

Ther was also a Reve and a Millere,
A Somnour and a Pardoner also,
A Maunciple, and my-self; ther were na-mo.

The Miller

The MILLER was a stout carl, for the nones,
Ful big he was of braun, and eek of bones;
That proved wel, for over-al ther he cam,
At wrastling he wolde have alwey the ram.
He was short-sholdred, brood, a thikke knarre,
Ther was no dore that he nolde heve of harre,
Or breke it, at a renning, with his heed.
His berd as any sowe or fox was reed,
And ther-to brood, as thogh it were a spade.
Up-on the cop right of his nose he hade
A werte, and ther-on stood a tuft of heres,
Reed as the bristles of a sowes eres;
His nose-thirles blake were and wyde.
A swerd and bokeler bar he by his syde;
His mouth as greet was as a greet fornéys.
He was a jangler and a goliardeys,

And that was most of sinne and harlotryës.
Wel coude he stelen corn, and tollen thryës;
And yet he hadde a thombe of gold, pardee.
A whyt cote and a blew hood wered he.
A baggepype wel coude he blowe and sowne,
And ther-with-al he bróghte us out of towne. . . .

The Reve

The REVE was a sclendre colerik man,
His berd was shave as ny as ever he can.
His heer was by his eres round y-shorn.
His top was dokked lyk a preest biforn.
Ful longe were his legges, and ful lene,
Y-lyk a staf, there was no calf y-sene.
Wel coude he kepe a gerner and a binne;
Ther was noon auditour coude on him winne.
Wel wiste he, by the droghte, and by the reyn,
The yelding of his seed, and of his greyn.
His lordes sheep, his neet, his dayërye,
His swyn, his hors, his stoor, and his pultrye,
Was hoolly in this reves governing,
And by his covenaunt yaf the rekening,
Sin that his lord was twenty yeer of age;
Ther coude no man bringe him in arreráge.
There nas baillíf, ne herde, ne other hyne,
That he ne knew his sleighte and his covyne;
They were adrad of him, as of the deeth.
His woning was ful fair up-on an heeth,
With grene treës shadwed was his place.
He coude bettre than his lord purchace.
Ful riche he was astored prively,
His lord wel coude he plesèn subtilly,
To yeve and lene him of his owene good,
And have a thank, and yet a cote and hood.
In youthe he lerned hadde a good mistér;
He was a wel good wrighte, a carpenter.
This reve sat up-on a ful good stot,
That was al pomely grey, and highte Scot.

A long surcote of pers up-on he hade,
And by his syde he bar a rusty blade.
Of Northfolk was this reve, of which I telle,
Bisyde a toun men clepen Baldeswelle.
Tukked he was, as is a frere, aboute,
And ever he rood the hindreste of our route.

The Somnour

A Somnour was ther with us in that place,
That hadde a fyr-reed cherubinnes face,
For sawcefleem he was, with eyen narwe.
[And quyk] he was, and [chirped] as a sparwe;
With scalled browes blake, and piled berd;
Of his visage children were aferd.
Ther nas quik-silver, litarge, ne brimstoon,
Boras, ceruce, ne oille of tartre noon,
Ne oynement that wolde clense and byte,
That him mighte helpen of his whelkes whyte,
Nor of the knobbes sittinge on his chekes.
Wel loved he garleek, oynons, and eek lekes,
And for to drinken strong wyn, reed as blood.
Thanne wolde he speke, and crye as he were wood.
And whan that he wel dronken hadde the wyn,
Than wolde he speke no word but Latyn.
A fewe termes hadde he, two or three,
That he had lerned out of som decree;
No wonder is, he herde it al the day;
And eek ye knowen wel, how that a jay
Can clepen "Watte," as wel as can the pope.
But who-so coude in other thing him grope,
Thanne hadde he spent al his philosophyë;
Ay "*Questio quid iuris*" wolde he cryë.
He was a gentil harlot and a kinde;
A bettre felawe sholde men noght finde.
He wolde suffre, for a quart of wyn,
A good [have his wikked syn]
A twelf[illegible]nd excuse him atte fulle:
Ful pri[illegible]ch eek coude he pulle.

And if he fond o-wher a good feláwe,
He wolde techen him to have non awe,
In swich cas, of thë erchedeknes curs,
But-if a mannes soule were in his purs;
For in his purs he sholde y-punisshed be.
"Purs is the erchedeknes helle," seyde he.
But wel I woot, he lyëd right in dede;
Of cursing oghte ech gilty man him drede —
For curs wol slee, right as assoilling saveth —
And also war him of a *Significavit*.
In daunger hadde he at his owene gyse
The yonge girles of the diocyse,
And knew hir counseil, and was al hir reed.
A gerland hadde he set up-on his heed,
As greet as it were for an ale-stake;
A bokeler hadde he maad him of a cake.

The Pardoner

With him ther rood a gentil PARDONER
Of Rouncival, his freend and his compeer,
That streight was comen fro the court of Romë.
Ful loude he song, "Com hider, love, tó me."
This somnour bar to him a stif burdoun,
Was never trompe of half so greet a soun.
This pardoner hadde heer as yelow as wex,
But smothe it heng, as dooth a stryke of flex;
By ounces henge his lokkes that he hadde,
And ther-with he his shuldres overspradde;
But thinne it lay, by colpons oon and oon;
But hood, for jolitee, ne wered he noon,
For it was trussed up in his walét.
Him thoughte, he rood al of the newe jet;
Dischevelee, save his cappe, he rood al bare.
Swiche glaringe eyen hadde he as an hare.
A vernicle hadde he sowed upon his cappe.
His walet lay biforn him in his lappe,
Bret-ful of pardon come from Rome al hoot.
A voys he hadde as smal as eny goot.

No berd hadde he, ne never sholde have,
As smothe it was as it were late y-shave;
I trowe [his cheke and eek his chin were bare.]
But of his craft, fro Berwik into Ware,
Ne was ther swich another pardoner.
For in his male he hadde a pilwe-beer,
Which that, he seyde, was our lady veyl:
He seyde, he hadde a gobet of the seyl
That sëynt Peter hadde, whan that he wente
Up-on the see, til Jesu Crist him hente.
He hadde a croys of latoun, ful of stones,
And in a glas he hadde pigges bones.
But with thise relikes, whan that he fond
A poure person dwelling up-on lond,
Up-on a day he gat him more moneyë
Than that the person gat in monthes tweyë.
And thus, with feyned flaterye and japes,
He made the person and the peple his apes.
But trewely to tellen, atte laste,
He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste.
Wel coude he rede a lessoun or a storie,
But alderbest he song an offertórie;
For wel he wiste, whan that song was songe,
He moste preche, and wel affyle his tonge,
To winne silver, as he ful wel coude;
Therefore he song so merily and loude.

Now have I told you shortly, in a clause,
Thestat, tharray, the nombre, and eek the cause
Why that assembled was this companyë
In Southwerk, at this gentil hostelryë,
That highte the Tabard, faste by the Belle.
But now is tyme to yow for to telle
How that we baren us that ilke night,
Whan we were in that hostelrye alight.
And after wol I telle of our viáge,
And all the remenaunt of our pilgrimage.

CHAPTER III

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

THE IMITATORS OF CHAUCER; THE RENAISSANCE; THE PRINTING PRESS; THE BALLAD

The fifteenth century is ordinarily regarded as the most barren period in English literary history. It is true that the century produced no poet who can be considered in any way comparable with Chaucer, or who may be regarded as having any place among the greater English poets. Various explanations for this literary inactivity have been suggested. Some believe that it was owing to the distracting influence of the civil and foreign wars which very largely make up the history of the age; others, that the intellectual energies of the nation were too largely centred in an effort to discard, once for all, the mediæval fashion of thought and expression — the lifeless formalities of tradition — and to fit itself out anew with the free and flowing garments of culture and romance presented by the Italian Renaissance.

However, this period, though barren of great poets, is by no means unimportant in the historical development of our poetry. In the first place its literary judgment was sufficiently true to recognize in a Chaucer the master that he was. A considerable school of imitators followed him, both in Scotland, where the productions at times attain to a really high standard, and in England, where the verse, though of third-rate excellence, did much to preserve Chaucer's standard of poetic style and to insure the permanence and the nationalization of the East Midland dialect which he had used.

More important than the actual literary output of this period is the wonderful intellectual impulse which England was beginning to receive through the inspiration of the Renaissance. Many new schools were organized. Oxford and Cambridge grew apace. The great universities of Scotland sprang up. The literature of the classics was studied, and the taste and culture of ancient Greece and Rome again became the possession of the world. The scholasticism of the Middle Ages, with its musty and pedantic controversies concerning matters of

no actual significance, shrivelled away before the vivifying and illuminating blaze of the new learning. Finally mediæval romantic poetry, by whose influence France had dominated English letters to the time of Chaucer, gave place to a poetry dominated for nearly three centuries by the influence of Italy.

But one event of the fifteenth century has played a greater part than any other — perhaps greater than all others combined — in the development of literature. The printing press was invented in Germany near the middle of the century and was brought into England by Caxton about 1476. In our present day of many books it is hard to imagine the situation that had existed before printing lent its aid to the dissemination of thought. After 1476 it was for the first time possible in England that the world of letters might become the actual possession of the world of men. Among the hundred volumes that came from Caxton's press were two or three editions of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, as well as the *Morte Darthur* of Sir Thomas Malory, a splendid work in prose, which, as we shall see, was destined to be the forerunner of Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*.

As has been said, no English poets of the fifteenth century attained to any considerable eminence. But in spite of this fact, the literary importance of this period will be apparent when we note that, in all probability, this was the especial springtide of most of our finest old English ballads. While, therefore, the more formal and artistic poetry was absent, this popular lyric strain in English verse reached a higher level than any to which it had previously risen. As a factor in awakening the poetic sensibilities of the whole people, in increasing the flexibility of English verse forms, and in furnishing, through their sincerity and directness and simplicity, a model for all subsequent "literary" poets, the importance of these ballads cannot easily be overestimated. They are for the most part the work of unknown authors, — unwritten songs from the heart of the people, handed down from generation to generation. Constantly added to, constantly changing, they appear as a growth, rather than a conscious literary production; and they are a growth for which much credit must be given to this so-called "barren" fifteenth century.

The student will heartily enjoy many of these ballads. To print here a representative collection would require more space than can be afforded, but the best ballads are readily accessible in Gayley and Flaherty's Poetry of the People (Ginn & Co.) and in the collections edited by F. B. Gummere (Athenæum Press Series), W. M. Hart (Lake English Classics), and W. D. Armes (Macmillan's Pocket Classics).

CHAPTER IV

THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

1. THE PRE-ELIZABETHAN ERA — A PERIOD OF PREPARATION

The Renaissance in England bore fruit more tardily than in most other European countries. Here, both in the fifteenth century and in the early part of the sixteenth, there was in existence a process of absorption and unconscious growth, sooner or later destined to find expression in a new English literature. Presently, under the impulse of these influences, poetry began to assume the form and spirit of modern English verse. As we have seen, the prime stimulus was derived from Italy; and with two English noblemen, Italian travellers and scholars, this new poetry really had its origin. These students of the literary art of Italy were Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey. Though neither of the two can in any sense be considered an eminent poet, still their influence on our literature was so opportune that they deserve at least a passing glance.

Wyatt (1503–1542) was a native of Kent and a graduate of Cambridge. He was a favorite at the court of Henry VIII, and was sent by the king on numerous missions to foreign countries. This life familiarized him with the best literature of the time and did much to develop his style; for Wyatt was very early a maker of verse. He experimented with many forms of rhyme and metre, the most important of which was the sonnet, a stanza devised by Petrarch, the sweet Italian lyrist of the fourteenth century. To Wyatt, accordingly, the English language owes what has always been regarded as one of its most expressive and harmonious verse forms.

Surrey (1518–1547) was both friend and disciple of Wyatt. He was educated at Oxford, became popular at court, served with distinction in a war with France, travelled and studied in Italy. At length, falling under the displeasure of King Henry, he was accused of treason and beheaded at the early age of twenty-nine. Though less serious and thoughtful than Wyatt, he shows in his poetry a livelier wit and a more delicate fancy. He not only tried his hand at

practically all the metres which his master had attempted, but went farther by adding one which has proved of the very highest importance in English poetry, — iambic pentameter blank verse. It is barely possible that Surrey invented this verse form, but more probable that he adopted it from the Italians, among whom it was just coming into use. He employed it in his translation of the second and fourth books of Virgil's *Æneid;* it was soon adopted by Sackville in the versification of *Ferrex and Porrex*, the first regular English tragedy; it was later developed by Marlowe, the earliest of the greater Elizabethan dramatists; and it was finally brought to its perfection in the "dramatic blank" of Shakespeare's plays and in the "epic blank" of Milton's longer poems.

Undoubtedly Wyatt and Surrey never thought of publishing their poems; nor did the general public know of these verses until Surrey had been dead ten, and Wyatt fifteen, years. It was at this time that a printer by the name of Richard Tottel brought out a collection of poems, worthy of our attention as the first of the kind in modern English poetry. Of this collection, *Tottel's Miscellany* (1557), nearly one hundred poems were written by Wyatt, about forty by Surrey, and not far from a hundred and fifty by various and "uncertain authors." By this volume the English world was introduced to a species of poetry entirely new, not only in form, but also in subject and in treatment. The poems were nearly all lyrics, many of them sonnets, intensely personal, and written on the subject of the joys and sorrows of their authors' loves. But by means of this book a new standard was set for English verse, the preparation of a century and a half had borne its fruitage, and the "Elizabethan age" was ushered in.

2. THE ELIZABETHAN AGE — THE FIRST GREAT CREATIVE PERIOD

The first twenty years after the accession of Elizabeth in 1558 are in literature to a great extent years of experiment, rather than years of actual performance. In all departments of literary production — prose, the drama, and non-dramatic poetry, — we see these experiments everywhere in progress, and instinctively feel that their success is near at hand. Circumstances were now favorable for the active outburst of the mighty forces which England had been storing up for the past two centuries. The people were prosperous and contented. A national spirit pervaded the country as never before.

Civil and religious disturbances had, for the time, ceased. Commerce was sailing every sea. A spirit of knightly adventure was in the air. Men were coming more and more to realize the possibilities of life in this old world of ours. All classes vied with each other in enthusiastic devotion to the virgin queen. In this epoch of splendid energy it was but natural that the greatness of England should find some adequate expression; and it found that expression in the magnificent poems and dramas which distinguish this, the greatest creative period of her literature.

The chief distinction of this age is undoubtedly the amazing development of the English drama. A consideration of that form of literature is foreign to the purposes of this volume; we must therefore be satisfied to accord to it here merely the briefest mention. Omitting all reference to the growth of the drama in its earlier forms, and passing over a large group of minor dramatists who of themselves would have given distinction to any lesser age, we may select for notice CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE (1564–1593), Shakespeare's greatest predecessor; the scholarly BEN JONSON (1573–1637), an intellectual giant in more ways than one; and, chief of all (1564–1616), the immortal Bard of Avon. The general verdict of his countrymen ranks SHAKESPEARE as incomparably the first of English poets. And not a few of other than Anglo-Saxon birth will subscribe to the words of Carlyle, who says in his *Heroes and Hero Worship*, "I think the best judgment, not of this country only but of Europe at large, is pointing to the conclusion that Shakespeare is the chief of all poets hitherto; the greatest intellect who in our recorded world has left a record of himself in literature." This, therefore, was a golden achievement of the Elizabethan age; that Shakespeare and Jonson and Marlowe and a score of others created a dramatic literature which the succeeding three hundred years failed to equal in any particular.

But standing apart from the dramatists was one who would have lent distinction to the age in which he lived even if, as was the case of Chaucer, he had been almost its only poet. This was the poet of pastoral and allegory, EDMUND SPENSER.

EDMUND SPENSER (1552–1599)

Edmund Spenser, "the poet and prophet of beauty," was born in London in 1552. Though without the humor of Chaucer, or the dramatic power and intensity of Shakespeare, or the sublimity of Milton, or the reflective insight of Wordsworth, Spenser nevertheless was the

possessor of gifts which rank him honorably with these masters of English poetry. It is true that the qualities which distinguish his poetry are not such as tend to make him well known to the general reader of to-day; yet he has exerted an influence on writers and lovers of poetry sufficient to secure for him, above all others, the title of "the poet's poet."

1552–1580. — Of Spenser's early life little is known. His parents, though of good birth, were evidently poor, for we find the future poet at the age of seventeen enrolled at Pembroke College, Cambridge, as a sizar, or charity student. Having duly taken his master's degree at the age of twenty-four, he spent two years in the north of England, probably with relatives in Lancashire. On his return south in 1578 he was introduced by a college friend to the influential Earl of Leicester, and to Sir Philip Sidney, the nephew of the earl. By the next year he had written his *Shepheardes Calender*, an eclogue, or pastoral, in twelve books, one for each month of the year. Through the efforts of Leicester he received, about this time, an appointment as secretary to Lord Gray, the new Lord Deputy of Ireland. That island, then lawless and turbulent, was destined to be the poet's home.

1580–1599. — Spenser continued to hold various official positions in his new home, and in 1588 secured for himself the grant of Kilcolman Castle and its estate, situated in county Cork. Here he was visited the next year by Sir Walter Raleigh, who found the poet in the midst of his great epic, the *Faerie Queene*, of which he had already written the first three books. Raleigh was so delighted with the poem that he persuaded its author to take it to London, where it was received with an equal delight. Spenser, as an unwilling suitor for the favor of the court, seems to have spent nearly two years in this visit to England; and during that time he published not only this earlier portion of the *Faerie Queene*, but also a volume of his minor poems. Having received a pension of fifty pounds, he returned to his Irish estate, where he was married in 1594. The next year he came again to London, with three more books of his great poem, which he published together with his *Prothalamion* and other minor poems. Again returning to Ireland he was made sheriff of Cork — an office to which he had scarcely been appointed when a rebellion broke out and his house was burned. He was compelled to flee with his family for safety, first to Cork and then to London, where, broken in spirit and fortune, he died soon after his arrival, January, 1599. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, not far from the tomb of Chaucer.

Of Spenser's poems, both the *Prothalamion* and the *Epithalamion* are stately strains remarkable both for their thought and for the melody of their verse. But the *Faerie Queene* will always be most intimately associated with the poet's name, not only because it is his most considerable work, but also because it ranks with the most nobly conceived and executed of England's ideal poems. The noble purpose of this romantic epic Spenser himself disclosed in a letter to Sir Walter Raleigh: "The generall end therefore of all the booke, is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline." And so it is that in the beauty which invests the stories of knightly adventure and heroic enterprise with which the poem abounds, the reader apprehends a constant spiritual presence or purpose, — the poet's desire to stimulate youth to noble emulation, to instil the chivalrous ideal of manhood, the ideal of Arthur and Lancelot, of Sir Philip Sidney and Sir Walter Raleigh. His serious theme Spenser has invested with the dream and glamour of the land of faery, "with its hidden pow'r of herbs and might of magic spell," its elves and guileful sprights, charmèd ladies and lagging dwarfs, witches and wizards, darksome caves, fearful dragons, and mysterious castles. If Chaucer's Wife of Bath could have entered Spenser's forests of marvel, she would not have begun her Canterbury story with the complaint,

> In tholde dayes of the Kyng Arthour,
> Of which that Britons speken greet honour,
> All was this land fulfild of faëryë.
> The elf queene with hir joly compaignyë
> Daunced ful ofte in many a grene mede.
> This was the olde opinion as I rede, —
> I speke of manye hundred yeres ago, —
> But now kan no man se none elves mo.

That all the antique imagery of this land of faery is but a way of quaintly and perhaps wistfully commending to our hearts the profounder theme of an unworldly spirit, Spenser himself intimates in this address to Queen Elizabeth:

> Right well I wote, most mighty sovereign,
> That all this famous ántique history
> Of some th' abundance of an idle brain
> Will judgèd be, and painted forgery,
> Rather than matter of just memory;

Sith none that breatheth living air doth know
Where is that happy land of Faëry,
Which I so much do vaunt, yet nowhere show;
But vouch antiquities, which nobody can know.

But let that man with better sense advise,
That of the world least part to us is read;
And daily how through hardy enterprize
Many great regions are discoverèd,
Which to late age were never mentionèd, —
Who ever heard of th' Indian Peru?
Or who in venturous vessel measurèd
The Amazon, huge river, now found true?
Or fruitfullest Virginia who did ever view?

Yet all these were, when no man did them know,
Yet have from wisest ages hidden been;
And later times things more unknown shall show.
Why then should witless man so much misween,
That nothing is, but that which he hath seen?
What, if within the moon's fair shining sphere,
What, if in every other star unseen,
Of other worlds he happily should hear?
He wonder would much more; yet such to some appear.

Of Faery land yet if he more inquire,
By certain signs, here set in sundry place,
He may it find; . . .
And thou, O fairest princess under sky,
In this fair mirror mayst behold thy face,
And thine own realms in land of Faëry,
And in this ántique image thy great ancestry.

Doubtless it is to this characteristic union of romantic chivalry, fairy enchantment, and spiritual intent that Milton refers in *Il Penseroso*, lines 116–120 (see below, p. 73).

In the softness and melody of his verse, the luxurious richness and harmony of his colorings, the delicacy of his fanciful conceptions,

his sensitiveness to beauty of every form, — in short, in the imaginative and sensuous, the purely "poetical," no Englishman has surpassed, and few have ever approached Spenser. His art of gentle, picturesque beauty may be seen in this description of a hermitage:

A little lowly Hermitage it was,
Down in a dale, hard by a forest's side,
Far from resort of people that did pass
In travel to and fro: a little wide
There was an holy chapel edified,
Wherein the Hermit duly wont to say
His holy things each morn and eventide;
Thereby a crystal stream did gently play,
Which from a sacred fountain wellèd forth alway.

The dreamery of his music is felt in these lines on the dwelling of Morpheus, the god of sleep:

And more to lull him in his slumber soft,
A trickling stream from high rock tumbling down,
And ever-drizzling rain upon the loft,
Mixt with a murmuring wind much like the sowne
Of swarming Bees, did cast him in a swoon.
No other noise, nor people's troublous cries,
As still are wont t' annoy the wallèd town,
Might there be heard; but careless Quiet lies
Wrapt in eternal silence far from enemies.

Thus throughout the long poem — and it is one of the longest in our language, more than twice the length of *Paradise Lost* or the *Idylls of the King* — Spenser "pour'd his song o'er all the mazes of enchanted ground." "His verse," said Matthew Arnold, "is more fluid, slips more easily and quickly along, than the verse of almost any other English poet."

The fearful and the horrible, too, fall again and again under the sway of Spenser's genius, as in this account of the cave of the "man of hell that calls himself Despair":

Ere long they come where that same wicked wight
His dwelling has, low in a hollow cave,
Far underneath a craggy cliff ypight,
Dark, doleful, dreary, like a greedy grave,
That still for carrion carcases doth crave:
On top whereof aye dwelt the ghastly Owl,
Shrieking his baleful note, which ever drave
Far from that haunt all other cheerful fowl,
And all about it wand'ring ghosts did wail and howl.

To Chaucer, whom he loved, Spenser owed something of his art; to Spenser the poets who followed him owed much of theirs. From Sidney, his contemporary, to Milton; from Cowley, Gray, and James Thomson to Rossetti, Swinburne, and William Morris, — English poets have listened to the sweetness of Spenser's verse and in what Lowell calls his "land of pure heart's ease" have drunk deep of a subtle beauty. But few have reverenced him to better effect than did Keats. The student who delights in *The Eve of St. Agnes* — the Beadsman and his "thousand *aves* told," and Angela the old, feebly laughing in the languid moon — will find strangely familiar many a line and picture in the *Faerie Queene*, — for example, this description of Una's forcible entrance into Corceca's hut.

Which when none yielded, her unruly Page
With his rude claws the wicket open rent,
And let her in; where, of his cruel rage
Nigh dead with fear, and faint astonishment,
She found them both in darksome corner pent;
Where that old woman day and night did pray
Upon her beads devoutly penitent;
Nine hundred *Pater nosters* every day,
And thrice nine hundred *Aves*, she was wont to say.

And, to augment her painful penance more,
Thrice every week in ashes she did sit,
And next her wrinkled skin rough sackcloth wore,
And thrice three times did fast from any bit:
But now for fear her beads she did forget.

ELIZABETHAN LYRISTS

The songs of the Elizabethan age are unexcelled in spontaneous vigor, charm, and sincerity. Some one has said that England was at this time "a nest of singing birds." At no other time in her history, and possibly in no other voice save that of Burns, has the "singing note," rung so true and clear as from the throng of Elizabethan poets. They sang of many subjects — of the herdsman's happy life and the pleasures of the greenwood, of spring flowers and the lark at heaven's gate, of nightingales and the moon excellently bright, of the icicles of winter and of milk frozen in the pail, of Virginia voyages and of battles by land and sea, of ingratitude and benefits forgot, of the noble contentment of the philosopher and of the eerie ways of fairy folk, of the mystery of living and dying — but most of all they sang of golden lads and lasses, of sweet and twenty, and true love's coming, and journeys that end in lovers meeting. Various as are these love notes, ranging from the arch compliment of the courtier to what is almost the simple freshness of the folk song, they are as a whole astonishingly exquisite and true, — like the unpremeditated overflow of happy minds.

The sonnet, as we have already said, was introduced into English poetry by Wyatt and Surrey in the pre-Elizabethan period. Little attention, however, was paid to the new form until Sir Philip Sidney published, in 1591, his sonnet sequence, *Astrophel and Stella*, in which he celebrates his devotion to a fair incognita, probably Penelope Devereux, daughter of the Earl of Essex. The enthusiasm with which these sonnets were received marked the beginning of an extraordinary vogue. In the next few years many sonnet sequences appeared, including those of Spenser and Shakespeare; before long English sonnets could be counted by the thousand. Though some excellent poetry was composed in this new style of verse, the form itself was highly artificial, and in general the Elizabethan sonnet is self-conscious and strained in comparison with the songs of the period

To write sonnets and songs was the fashion of the time. Men of affairs, like SIR WALTER RALEIGH (1552–1618), and SIR EDWARD DYER (1550?–1607); courtiers, like SIR PHILIP SIDNEY (1554–1586); critics and musicians, like THOMAS CAMPION (1567?–1619); dramatists and poets — SPENSER (1552–1599), JOHN LYLY (1554?–1606), GEORGE PEELE (1558–1598?), ROBERT GREENE (1560?–1592), CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE (1564–1593), BEN JONSON (1573–1637), FRANCIS BEAUMONT (1584–1616), — all these, who are represented in this book,

and many more who are not included here, composed with happy ardor. But the greatest of them was SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616). Since his glory rests chiefly upon his plays, an account of his life and works does not come within the scope of this book. But fortunately this master of drama is also a master in the lyric. We have space here for only three of his best sonnets and nine of his incomparable songs.

Some of the lyrics which follow were first published a few years after the end of the sixteenth century, but for convenience' sake, and because the age was still Elizabethan, they are here included with those written before 1601. The dates of the poems are given in the *Notes*, and the poets are arranged, irrespective of their relative importance, in the order of their dates of birth.

SIR EDWARD DYER (1550?–1607)

MY MIND TO ME A KINGDOM IS

My mind to me a kingdom is,
  Such present joys therein I find
That it excels all other bliss
  That earth affords or grows by kind:
Though much I want which most would have,
Yet still my mind forbids to crave.

. . . . . .

I see how plenty [surfeits] oft,
  And hasty climbers soon do fall;
I see that those which are aloft
  Mishap doth threaten most of all;
They get with toil, they keep with fear:
Such cares my mind could never bear.

Content to live, this is my stay;
  I seek no more than may suffice;
I press to bear no haughty sway;
  Look, what I lack my mind supplies:
Lo, thus I triumph like a king,
Content with that my mind doth bring.

Some have too much, yet still do crave;
I little have, and seek no more.
They are but poor, though much they have,
And I am rich with little store:
They poor, I rich; they beg, I give;
They lack, I leave; they pine, I live.

. . . . . .

My wealth is health and perfect ease;
My conscience clear my chief defence;
I neither seek by bribes to please,
Nor by deceit to breed offence:
Thus do I live; thus will I die;
Would all did so as well as I!

SIR WALTER RALEIGH (1552–1618)

A VISION UPON THIS CONCEIT OF THE FAERY QUEEN

Methought I saw the grave where Laura lay,
Within that temple where the vestal flame
Was wont to burn; and, passing by that way,
To see that buried dust of living fame,
Whose tomb fair Love and fairer Virtue kept,
All suddenly I saw the Faery Queen;
At whose approach the soul of Petrarch wept,
And from thenceforth those graces were not seen,
For they this queen attendèd; in whose stead
Oblivion laid him down on Laura's hearse.
Hereat the hardest stones were seen to bleed,
And groans of buried ghosts the heavens did pierce:
Where Homer's sprite did tremble all for grief,
And cursed the accèss of that celestial thief.

THE CONCLUSION

Even such is time, that takes in trust
Our youth, our joys, our all we have,
And pays us but with earth and dust;
Who, in the dark and silent grave,

When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days:
But from this earth, this grave, this dust,
My God shall raise me up, I trust.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY (1554–1586)

A BARGAIN

My true-love hath my heart, and I have his,
By just exchange one for the other given:
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss,
There never was a bargain better driven.
My true-love hath my heart, and I have his.

His heart in me keeps him and me in one,
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides.
He loves my heart, for once it was his own,
I cherish his because in me it bides.
My true-love hath my heart, and I have his.

JOHN LYLY (1554?–1606)

APELLES' SONG

Cupid and my Campaspe played
At cards for kisses; Cupid paid.
He stakes his quiver, bow and arrows,
His mother's doves and team of sparrows:
Loses them too; then down he throws
The coral of his lip, the rose
Growing on's cheek (but none knows how);
With these the crystal of his brow,
And then the dimple of his chin:
All these did my Campaspe win.
At last he set her both his eyes;
She won, and Cupid blind did rise.
O Love, has she done this to thee?
What shall, alas! become of me?

GEORGE PEELE (1558–1598?)

HARVESTMEN A-SINGING

All ye that lovely lovers be,
Pray you for me:
Lo, here we come a-sowing, a-sowing,
And sow sweet fruits of love;
In your sweet hearts well may it prove!

Lo, here we come a-reaping, a-reaping,
To reap our harvest-fruit!
And thus we pass the year so long,
And never be we mute.

ROBERT GREENE (1560?–1592)

SEPHESTIA'S SONG TO HER CHILD

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee,
When thou art old there's grief enough for thee.
Mother's wag, pretty boy,
Father's sorrow, father's joy;
When thy father first did see
Such a boy by him and me,
He was glad, I was woe,
Fortune changèd made him so,
When he left his pretty boy
Last his sorrow, first his joy.

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee,
When thou art old there's grief enough for thee.
Streaming tears that never stint,
Like pearl drops from a flint,
Fell by course from his eyes,
That one another's place supplies;
Thus he grieved in every part,
Tears of blood fell from his heart,

When he left his pretty boy,
Father's sorrow, father's joy.

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee,
When thou art old there's grief enough for thee.
The wanton smiled, father wept,
Mother cried, baby leapt;
More he crowed, more he cried,
Nature could not sorrow hide:
He must go, he must kiss
Child and mother, baby bliss,
For he left his pretty boy,
Father's sorrow, father's joy.
Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee,
When thou art old there's grief enough for thee.

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE (1564–1593)

THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD TO HIS LOVE

Come live with me and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove,
That valleys, groves, hills, and fields,
Woods or steepy mountains yields.

And we will sit upon the rocks,
Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses,
And a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle;

A gown made of the finest wool,
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;
Fair-linèd slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and ivy-buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs:
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me and be my love.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delights each May morning;
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my love.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616)

Three Sonnets

XXIX

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,
Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, — and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet love remembered, such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

XXX

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes now wail my dear time's waste:
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,

And weep afresh love's long-since cancelled woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanished sight.
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoanèd moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored, and sorrows end.

CXVI

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fixèd mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

Nine Songs

WINTER

When icicles hang by the wall
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail;
When blood is nipt, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl
Tu-whit!
To-who! A merry note!
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,
  And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
  And Marian's nose looks red and raw;
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl
    Tu-whit!
To-who! A merry note!
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

WHO IS SILVIA?

Who is Silvia? what is she,
  That all our swains commend her?
Holy, fair, and wise is she;
  The heaven such grace did lend her,
That she might admirèd be.

Is she kind as she is fair?
  For beauty lives with kindness.
Love doth to her eyes repair
  To help him of his blindness,
And, being helped, inhabits there.

Then to Silvia let us sing,
  That Silvia is excelling;
She excels each mortal thing
  Upon the dull earth dwelling:
To her let us garlands bring.

UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE

Under the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me,
And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat —

Come hither, come hither, come hither!
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun
And loves to live i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats
And pleased with what he gets —
Come hither, come hither, come hither!
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

INGRATITUDE

Blow, blow, thou winter wind!
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh ho! sing heigh ho! unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then, heigh ho! the holly!
This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
Thou dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not.
Heigh ho! sing heigh ho! unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then, heigh ho! the holly!
This life is most jolly.

DIRGE OF LOVE

Come away, come away, Death,
And in sad cypress let me be laid;
Fly away, fly away, breath;
I am slain by a fair cruel maid.
My shroud of white, stuck all with yew,
O prepare it!
My part of death, no one so true
Did share it.

Not a flower, not a flower sweet
On my black coffin let there be strown;
Not a friend, not a friend greet
My poor corpse, where my bones shall be thrown:
A thousand thousand sighs to save,
Lay me, O where
Sad true lover never find my grave,
To weep there.

AUBADE

Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phœbus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes:
With every thing that pretty is,
My lady sweet, arise!
Arise, arise!

THE FAIRY LIFE

Come unto these yellow sands,
And then take hands:
Courtsied when you have, and kissed
The wild waves whist,

Foot it featly here and there;
And, sweet Sprites, the burthen bear.
Hark, hark!
Bow-wow.
The watch-dogs bark:
Bow-wow.
Hark, hark! I hear
The strain of strutting chanticleer
Cry, Cock-a-diddle-dow!

A SEA DIRGE

Full fathom five thy father lies:
Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes;
Nothing of him that doth fade
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell:
Ding-dong!
Hark! now I hear them, — Ding-dong, bell!

ARIEL'S SONG

Where the bee sucks, there suck I,
In a cowslip's bell I lie,
There I couch, when owls do cry;
On the bat's back I do fly
After summer merrily.
Merrily, merrily, shall I live now
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough!

THOMAS CAMPION (1567?–1619)

CHERRY-RIPE

There is a garden in her face
Where roses and white lilies blow;
A heavenly paradise is that place,
Wherein all pleasant fruits do flow:
There cherries grow which none may buy
Till 'Cherry-ripe' themselves do cry.

Those cherries fairly do enclose
Of orient pearl a double row,
Which when her lovely laughter shows,
They look like rosebuds filled with snow;
Yet them nor peer nor prince can buy
Till 'Cherry-ripe' themselves do cry.

Her eyes like angels watch them still;
Her brows like bended bows do stand,
Threatening with piercing frowns to kill
All that attempt with eye or hand
These sacred cherries to come nigh,
Till 'Cherry-ripe' themselves do cry.

BEN JONSON (1573–1637)

SONG TO CELIA

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
And I'll not look for wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise
Doth ask a drink divine;
But might I of Jove's nectar sup,
I would not change for thine.

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honoring thee
As giving it a hope that there
It could not withered be;
But thou thereon didst only breathe
And sent'st it back to me;
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
Not of itself but thee!

HYMN TO DIANA

Queen and Huntress, chaste and fair,
Now the sun is laid to sleep,
Seated in thy silver chair
State in wonted manner keep:
Hesperus entreats thy light,
Goddess excellently bright.

Earth, let not thy envious shade
Dare itself to interpose;
Cynthia's shining orb was made
Heaven to clear when day did close:
Bless us then with wishèd sight,
Goddess excellently bright.

Lay thy bow of pearl apart
And thy crystal-shining quiver;
Give unto the flying hart
Space to breathe, how short soever:
Thou that mak'st a day of night,
Goddess excellently bright.

SIMPLEX MUNDITIIS

Still to be neat, still to be dressed,
As you were going to a feast;
Still to be powdered, still perfumed:
Lady, it is to be presumed,

Though art's hid causes are not found,
All is not sweet, all is not sound.

Give me a look, give me a face,
That makes simplicity a grace;
Robes loosely flowing, hair as free:
Such sweet neglect more taketh me
Than all th' adulteries of art;
They strike mine eyes, but not my heart.

FRANCIS BEAUMONT (1584–1616)

ON THE TOMBS IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY

Mortality, behold and fear!
What a change of flesh is here!
Think how many royal bones
Sleep within these heaps of stones;
Here they lie, had realms and lands,
Who now want strength to stir their hands,
Where from their pulpits sealed with dust
They preach, 'In greatness is no trust.'
Here's an acre sown indeed
With the richest, royallest seed
That the earth did e'er suck in
Since the first man died for sin:
Here the bones of birth have cried
'Though gods they were, as men they died!'
Here are sands, ignoble things,
Dropt from the ruined sides of kings:
Here's a world of pomp and state
Buried in dust, once dead by fate.

CHAPTER V

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

1. TO THE RESTORATION

By the "Elizabethan age" literary historians commonly understand not only the years which comprise the reign of Elizabeth, but also those of the first two Stuarts and even of the Commonwealth, that is, down to the Restoration in 1660. We are undoubtedly justified in conceiving the boundaries of the era as extending beyond the great queen's death, in 1603, for at that time much of Shakespeare's best work was as yet unaccomplished, and Ben Jonson, who must certainly be classed as an Elizabethan, had been writing only a very few years. But the later, or post-Elizabethan, literature soon showed signs of decadence; the spirit which had animated it was failing; and by the time that the young Milton had written his first lyrics, 1629, the old order had well-nigh passed. The Puritan movement against the authority of the established church and the despotism of the crown was fast gathering head for the Great Rebellion of 1642 to 1649, by which both were overthrown.

In this chapter we shall first consider the poetry of the thirty years preceding the Restoration as represented by the lyrics of a group of writers all Cavalier, that is, royalist by birth or association, but some of them no less genuinely devoted to the concerns of the spiritual life than any Puritan. We shall then pass to their great contemporary, the poet in whom the Puritan movement found its supreme expression, John Milton.

Religious preoccupation and, by reaction, the debonair, unconvinced worldliness of the care-free Cavalier were the dominant moods of the new age and the new lyric. An oscillation between these moods is evident in the work of many a poet of that day, though each mood also had its own particular Parnassus of poets solely devoted to its service. Several of these writers modelled their verse on the clarity and metrical excellence of Ben Jonson. But as a whole the

lyric poetry of the period is characterized by a subtle introspective quality, a conscious artificiality and exaggeration, by a deliberate search for clever phrases and fantastic images, — derived chiefly from the example set by JOHN DONNE (1573–1631), of whom we cannot say more here. At the worst, the lyric of the contemporary gallant is marked by feigned emotion, heartless insincerity, and cynical hypocrisy. Doubtless something of Elizabethan spontaneity and vigor lingered; not a few of the older strains were yet heard, less natural, perhaps, and less rapturous than before, but still of a distinctive grace and beauty. Here we shall note only a few of the nobler or more charming expressions of the two principal moods of the age.

CAVALIER LYRISTS

ROBERT HERRICK (1591–1674), the easy-going Devonshire vicar, the genial poet of conviviality, country jollities, and sprightly maidens, was not exactly Chaucer's kind of 'poure Persoun.' Poor he was, and for twenty years he lived slenderly and quietly in the little out-of-the-way Vicarage of Dean Prior, near Dartmoor, quite removed from the turmoil and conflict of the age; but with whatever gentleness he may have discharged the pastoral duties of his office, his genius was certainly for the incantation of sensuous and social pleasures.

> I sing of brooks, of blossoms, birds, and bowers,
> Of April, May, of June, and July flowers;
> I sing of May-poles, hock-carts, wassails, wakes,
> Of bridegrooms, brides, and of their bridal-cakes.

So he states, in part, the argument of his collection of lyrics which he called *Hesperides* (1648), and, he adds, he would have his verses read "when that men have both well drunk and fed . . . and laurel spirts i' the fire." His lyrics are among the most tuneful in English poetry. This quality and the allurement of his simple, joyous subjects make him one of the most sunny and beguiling of English lyrists. He came also under the sway of the religious mood; but his more serious poems, *Noble Numbers* (1647), reveal a personality no less attractive because of greater depth.

Entirely devoted to religious musing were GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633) and HENRY VAUGHAN (1622–1695). Herbert's is the quieter spirit, the more ingenious and fanciful; Vaughan is more intense and imaginative. Herbert's subjects are simpler, his language

quainter, his music smoother; Vaughan's themes comprise the ecstatic reveries of the mystic, his diction is more vigorous, and his music grander. Two other religious poets of the age were GEORGE SANDYS (1577–1643) and RICHARD CRASHAW (1615?–1650). — The Cavalier poets whose service was all of the other sort, — courtly, playful, worldly, — are represented here by SIR JOHN SUCKLING (1609–1642) and RICHARD LOVELACE (1618–1658). The lives of these two young Royalists were as tragic as their verses are vivacious; but that is another story. Some of their love poems show very clearly the insincerity of compliment and extravagance of imagery which were characteristic of court poetry and which are particularly evident in the work of THOMAS CAREW (1589?–1639). — JAMES SHIRLEY (1596–1666), a voluminous but imitative writer of masques and plays, is known to the ordinary reader of to-day chiefly by the noble lyric, true to the best English traditions of political justice, which is printed below. WILLIAM HABINGTON (1605–1654) wrote of love and religion, but his love lyrics are a beautiful tribute to his wife, "the center alike of his life and poetry." Our selection is the best example of his religious verse, — mystical and stern. Of the ecstasy with which both Vaughan and Habington contemplate God in nature the student will be reminded when he comes to read Wordsworth. EDMUND WALLER (1605–1687), regarded by his contemporaries as the first of English poets, popularized the "closed" couplet, rhymed and rhetorical, which became the vehicle of the "reformed poetry" of the age of Dryden and Pope. "Waller's muse always presents herself in irreproachable condition, not a curl out of place, not a spot or crease on her dress, the colors chosen with sufficient taste, the arrangement made with sufficient skill." — For the lyrics of MILTON (1608–1674) see the next subdivision of this chapter.

The poets are arranged in the order of their dates of birth.

ROBERT HERRICK (1591–1674)

GATHER YE ROSEBUDS WHILE YE MAY

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying;
And this same flower that smiles to-day,
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,
The higher he's a-getting,
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.

That age is best which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer;
But being spent, the worse, and worst
Times still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,
And while ye may, go marry;
For, having lost but once your prime,
You may forever tarry.

TO DAFFODILS

Fair Daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon;
As yet the early rising sun
Has not attained his noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the even-song;
And, having prayed together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you,
We have as short a spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you, or anything.
We die
As your hours do, and dry
Away,
Like to the summer's rain;
Or as the pearls of morning's dew,
Ne'er to be found again.

GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633)

VIRTUE

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky,
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night;
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue, angry and brave,
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye,
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie,
My music shows ye have your closes,
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like seasoned timber, never gives;
But though the whole world turn to coal,
Then chiefly lives.

JAMES SHIRLEY (1596–1666)

THE GLORIES OF OUR BLOOD AND STATE

The glories of our blood and state
Are shadows, not substantial things;
There is no armor against fate;
Death lays his icy hand on kings;
Sceptre and Crown
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

Some men with swords may reap the field,
And plant fresh laurels where they kill;
But their strong nerves at last must yield,
They tame but one another still;
Early or late
They stoop to fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath
When they, pale captives, creep to death.

The garlands wither on your brow;
Then boast no more your mighty deeds;
Upon Death's purple altar now
See where the victor-victim bleeds:
Your heads must come
To the cold tomb;
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet, and blossom in their dust.

EDMUND WALLER (1605–1687)

GO, LOVELY ROSE!

Go, lovely rose,
Tell her that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her that's young,
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That had'st thou sprung
In deserts where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired;
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die, that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee;
How small a part of time they share
That are so wondrous sweet and fair.

WILLIAM HABINGTON (1605–1654)

NOX NOCTI INDICAT SCIENTIAM

When I survey the bright
Celestial sphere,
So rich with jewels hung, that night
Doth like an Ethiop bride appear,

My soul her wings doth spread
And heavenward flies,
Th' Almighty's mysteries to read
In the large volumes of the skies.

For the bright firmament
Shoots forth no flame
So silent, but is eloquent
In speaking the Creator's name.

No unregarded star
Contracts its light
Into so small a character,
Removed far from our human sight,

But, if we steadfast look,
We shall discern
In it, as in some holy book,
How man may heavenly knowledge learn.

It tells the conqueror
That far-stretched power,
Which his proud dangers traffic for,
Is but the triumph of an hour;

That from the farthest North,
Some nation may,
Yet undiscovered, issue forth,
And o'er his new-got conquest sway:

Some nation yet shut in
With hills of ice
May be let out to scourge his sin,
Till they shall equal him in vice.

And then they likewise shall
Their ruin have;
For as yourselves your empires fall,
And every kingdom hath a grave.

Thus those celestial fires,
Though seeming mute,
The fallacy of our desires
And all the pride of life confute;

For they have watched since first
The world had birth,
And found sin in itself accursed,
And nothing permanent on earth.

SIR JOHN SUCKLING (1609–1642)

WHY SO PALE AND WAN, FOND LOVER?

Why so pale and wan, fond lover?
Prythee, why so pale?
Will, if looking well can't move her,
Looking ill prevail?
Prythee, why so pale?

Why so dull and mute, young sinner?
Prythee, why so mute?
Will, when speaking well can't win her,
Saying nothing do't?
Prythee, why so mute?

Quit, quit, for shame! this will not move,
This cannot take her;
If of herself she will not love,
Nothing can make her:
The devil take her!

RICHARD LOVELACE (1618–1658)

TO LUCASTA, ON GOING TO THE WARS

Tell me not, Sweet, I am unkind,
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
As thou too shalt adore;
I could not love thee, Dear, so much,
Loved I not honor more.

HENRY VAUGHAN (1622–1695)

THE RETREAT

Happy those early days, when I
Shined in my angel-infancy,
Before I understood this place
Appointed for my second race,
Or taught my soul to fancy ought
But a white, celestial thought;
When yet I had not walked above
A mile or two from my first love,
And looking back, at that short space,
Could see a glimpse of His bright face;

When on some gilded cloud or flower
My gazing soul would dwell an hour,
And in those weaker glories spy
Some shadows of eternity;
Before I taught my tongue to wound
My conscience with a sinful sound,
Or had the black art to dispense
A several sin to every sense,
But felt through all this fleshly dress
Bright shoots of everlastingness.
O how I long to travel back,
And tread again that ancient track!
That I might once more reach that plain,
Where first I left my glorious train;
From whence th' enlightened spirit sees
That shady City of palm trees.
But ah, my soul with too much stay
Is drunk, and staggers in the way!
Some men a forward motion love,
But I by backward steps would move;
And, when this dust falls to the urn,
In that state I came, return.

From THE WORLD

I saw Eternity the other night,
Like a great ring of pure and endless light,
All calm, as it was bright;
And round beneath it Time in hours, days, years
Driven by the spheres
Like a vast shadow moved; in which the world
And all her train were hurled.

From DEPARTED FRIENDS

They are all gone into the world of light,
And I alone sit ling'ring here;
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

THE PURITAN INFLUENCE

The age of which we are speaking differed from the Elizabethan in many respects, but chiefly in that it was marked by a great civil and religious conflict. It is called the period of the Puritan revolution; but its literary limits cannot be precisely defined, for literary eras are independent of arbitrary or external bounds. Some Elizabethan poets, for instance, lived on and wrote up to the time of the Restoration; and the greatest of Puritans, Milton and Bunyan, produced their most characteristic work after their "period" had passed away and the excesses of the profligate Restoration had begun. There is no doubt, however, that from about 1610 to 1660, England, as a whole, was stirred by emotions and inspired by ideals far different from those which had held sway during the years of the Tudor Elizabeth. Characteristic tendencies — not to be confounded with those that followed or preceded — marked this period of Puritan influence.

In many ways the Puritan movement affected the life of the nation. "England," says Green, "became the people of a book, and that book was the Bible." For fifty years the religious side of life had been gaining in prominence. Theological discussion was rife. Men were developing, spiritually and intellectually. Demands for larger freedom, civil and religious, grew more vehement year by year. These demands James I and his son Charles I ignored or scornfully refused to grant. Charles went so far in his insistence upon his "divine right" to absolute power that in 1642 the great middle class of England found itself in arms against him. Since in the conflict that ensued the established church remained loyal to the king, the breach between churchman and Puritan was widened. The period was characterized by bitter religious and political controversy, by persecution, turbulence, and civil war. In 1649 Charles was overthrown, a Protectorate was soon established, and the triumph of Puritanism was complete.

This condition of affairs found expression in literature. Religious verse, theological discussions, fierce political treatises, now largely took the place of the rich, romantic poetry of the former age. The purely literary impulse was checked. With the outbreak of the Civil War the theatres were closed and "the splendid drama of the Elizabethans languished and died." A chorus of lyrists kept up its singing, as we know, but the poetry of the period would rank low in the esteem of posterity were it not for the splendid genius of MILTON.

JOHN MILTON (1608–1674)

Milton embodies in its most artistic literary form the spirit of Puritanism at its best. He is justly regarded not only as the poet, *par excellence*, of his time, but as one of the great poets of all time. In scholarly attainment, in critical insight, in his love of nature and truth, in his purity and earnestness of purpose, in his mastery of the grand style suitable to the reflective and epic expression, he is the equal, if not the superior, of any other English poet. He is lacking in dramatic power and in humor, and hence, to a certain extent, in the human element. He is therefore not a Shakespeare. In narrative portrayal of actual life he is not even a Chaucer; yet he is fittingly regarded as the most excellent of English non-dramatic poets. His later poems, more than any others in the language, may be described by the adjective "sublime"; his early lyrics have the grace, lightness, and exquisite fitness of phrase that mark the genius in verse, the artificer in words. Milton was, moreover, a man of broad public activity, and in this respect alone he would have left a deep impress upon the history of his time. So strong is his personality that through his works we know him almost as well as we know our contemporaries. His life falls easily into four very distinct divisions.

1608–1632. — Milton was born in London in December, 1608. His father was by occupation a scrivener, one whose business it is to draw up contracts and other legal documents; and was, moreover, a man of culture and of no little musical ability. The future poet's early education was received partly at St. Paul's school near his home, and partly under the guidance of most competent private tutors. At the age of sixteen he entered Christ's College, Cambridge; and for seven years he carried on his academic training with the earnest purpose which appeared in all his enterprises, taking in due order both bachelor's and master's degrees. His poetic output during these college years was principally in Latin, the most important of his English verse being the *Hymn on the Nativity*, 1629; the *Lines on Shakespeare*, 1630; and the *Sonnet on arriving at the Age of Twenty-three*, December, 1631.

1632–1640. — Milton's father had meanwhile given up business and retired with comfortable means of subsistence to a country home in Horton, a small village about twenty miles from London. To this home, by the generous consent of his father, the young college graduate came, with the avowed purpose of supplementing his education

with what he calls " a period of absolute leisure " — in reality a rigorous course in Greek and Latin literature, and a cultivation of the poetic talents with which he felt himself to be endowed. To us the residence at Horton is particularly memorable, since it was during these quiet years that Milton wrote the finest of his minor poems, among them *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, *Comus*, and *Lycidas*. After nearly six years thus spent at Horton, the poet made a journey to Italy, where he passed about a year and a half in study and travel. Though he wrote little during this time, he had already begun to plan for some great work such as was realized in the epics of his old age. He was preparing to extend his travels into Greece, when rumors of approaching civil strife caused him in 1639 to return home. About this time, possibly as a means of self-support, he opened a boys' school in London.

1640–1660. — This period we may dismiss briefly, since Milton's poetic production during these years consists of but a few sonnets, some two hundred lines in all. Of sonnets he wrote all together twenty-three: two in Cambridge, five during his journey in Italy (in Italian), and sixteen of varying degrees of excellence between 1642 and 1658. His literary work during these years consisted almost entirely of prose pamphlets on social and political questions of the day. Among the more notable of these were the *Areopagitica* — a plea for the freedom of the press — the *Tractate on Education*, the *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, and his *Defense for the English People*. Much of his work is violent and bitter in tone, and much, on the other hand, is sincerely and nobly eloquent. In 1643, at the age of thirty-five, he had married a certain Mary Powell, — a union which proved unhappy. In 1649 he was made Latin secretary to Cromwell, a position which he held for three years, when through overwork he became totally blind. However, he continued in his office until after the death of Cromwell in 1658, although his part in Commonwealth affairs during these later years was probably not important.

1660–1674. — On the Restoration, in 1660, Milton was first in hiding, and then for a time in custody; but, despite his connection with the politics of the Commonwealth, he was included in the general pardon issued by King Charles II. The blind poet, now fifty-two years of age, turned his back on the new world that came in with the Restoration, and calmly set himself to work toward the completion of an epic, *Paradise Lost*. This was finished in 1665 and published two years later. *Paradise Lost*, " whose style," as Stopford Brooke remarks, " is the greatest in the whole range of English poetry,"

could not have been produced in the early Horton period, or have been finished in the stormy years that followed. It is the suitable outgrowth of the period of calm upon which its writer had now entered. Following *Paradise Lost*, in 1671, *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* were published. Three years later, in 1674, the poet died, "old and blind and fallen on evil days," yet "with his Titanic proportions and independent loneliness, the most impressive figure in English literature."

L'ALLEGRO

Hence, loathèd Melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born
In Stygian cave forlorn,
'Mongst horrid shapes and shrieks and sights unholy!
Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night-raven sings;
There under ebon shades and low-browed rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.
But come, thou Goddess fair and free,
In heaven yclept Euphrosyne,
And by men heart-easing Mirth;
Whom lovely Venus, at a birth,
With two sister Graces more,
To ivy-crownèd Bacchus bore;
Or whether (as some sager sing)
The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
Zephyr, with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a-Maying,
There on beds of violets blue
And fresh-blown roses washed in dew,
Filled her with thee, a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee
Jest and youthful Jollity,
Quips and cranks and wanton wiles,
Nods and becks and wreathèd smiles,

Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it as you go,
On the light fantastic toe;
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty;
And if I give thee honor due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unreprovèd pleasures free:
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And singing, startle the dull night,
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come, in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good-morrow,
Through the sweet-briar or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine;
While the cock, with lively din,
Scatters the rear of darkness thin,
And to the stack, or the barn-door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:
Oft listening how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill:
Sometime walking, not unseen,
By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate
Where the great sun begins his state,
Robed in flames and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
While the ploughman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrowed land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,

And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorne in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures
Whilst the landscape round it measures:
Russet lawns and fallows grey,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains on whose barren breast
The laboring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks and rivers wide;
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosomed high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some beauty lies,
The cynosure of neighboring eyes.
Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis met
Are at their savory dinner set
Of herbs and other country messes,
Which the neat-handed Phyllis dresses;
And then in haste her bower she leaves,
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
Or, if the earlier season lead,
To the tanned haycock in the mead.
Sometimes, with secure delight,
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks sound
To many a youth and many a maid
Dancing in the chequered shade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holiday,
Till the livelong daylight fail:
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How faery Mab the junkets eat.
She was pinched and pulled, she said;
And he, by friar's lantern led,

Tells how the drudging goblin sweat
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn
That ten day-laborers could not end;
Then lies him down, the lubber fiend,
And, stretched out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength,
And crop-full out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lulled asleep.
Towered cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
In weeds of peace high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit or arms, while both contend
To win her grace whom all commend.
There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp and feast and revelry,
With mask and antique pageantry;
Such sights as youthful poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learnèd sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.
And ever, against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
In notes with many a winding bout
Of linkèd sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,

Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumber on a bed
Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto to have quite set free
His half-regained Eurydice.
These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

IL PENSEROSO

Hence, vain deluding Joys,
The brood of Folly without father bred!
How little you bested,
Or fill the fixèd mind with all your toys!
Dwell in some idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sun-beams,
Or likest hovering dreams,
The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.
But hail, thou Goddess sage and holy,
Hail, divinest Melancholy!
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,
And therefore, to our weaker view,
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
Or that starred Ethiop queen that strove
To set her beauty's praise above
The sea nymphs, and their powers offended.
Yet thou art higher far descended:
Thee bright-haired Vesta long of yore
To solitary Saturn bore;

His daughter she (in Saturn's reign
Such mixture was not held a stain).
Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
Whilst yet there was no fear of Jove.
Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain
Flowing with majestic train,
And sable stole of cypress lawn
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come, but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gait,
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
There, held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till
With a sad leaden downward cast
Thou fix them on the earth as fast.
And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
And hears the Muses in a ring
Aye round about Jove's altar sing:
And add to these retirèd Leisure
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure;
But first and chiefest, with thee bring
Him that yon soars on golden wing
Guiding the fiery-wheelèd throne,
The cherub Contemplatiön;
And the mute Silence hist along,
'Less Philomel will deign a song
In her sweetest, saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke
Gently o'er the accustomed oak.
Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy!

Thee, chauntress, oft, the woods among
I woo, to hear thy even-song;
And, missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wandering moon
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the heaven's wide pathless way,
And oft, as if her head she bowed,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft, on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off curfew sound,
Over some wide-watered shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar;
Or, if the air will not permit,
Some still removèd place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom,
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the bellman's drowsy charm
To bless the doors from nightly harm.
Or let my lamp, at midnight hour,
Be seen in some high lonely tower,
Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,
With thrice great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato, to unfold
What worlds or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook;
And of those demons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or underground,
Whose power hath a true consent
With planet or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
In sceptered pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine,

Or what (though rare) of later age
Ennobled hath the buskined stage.
But, O sad Virgin! that thy power
Might raise Musæus from his bower,
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes as, warbled to the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made Hell grant what love did seek;
Or call up him that left half told
The story of Cambúscan bold,
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canacè to wife,
That owned the virtuous ring and glass,
And of the wondrous horse of brass,
On which the Tartar king did ride;
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
Of tourneys and of trophies hung,
Of forests, and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.
Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited Morn appear,
Not tricked and frounced, as she was wont
With the Attic boy to hunt,
But kerchieft in a comely cloud,
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or ushered with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves,
With minute drops from off the eaves.
And, when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, Goddess, bring
To archèd walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
Of pine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude ax with heavèd stroke
Was never heard the nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.

There, in close covert, by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee with honeyed thigh,
That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring,
With such concert as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feathered sleep;
And let some strange mysterious dream
Wave at his wings, in airy stream
Of lively portraiture displayed,
Softly on my eyelids laid;
And, as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some spirit to mortals good,
Or the unseen genius of the wood.
But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloister's pale,
And love the high embowèd roof,
With antique pillars massy proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light.
There let the pealing organ blow
To the full-voiced choir below,
In service high and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all heaven before mine eyes.
And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star that heaven doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew;
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.
These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

LYCIDAS

In this Monody the Author bewails a learned Friend, unfortunately drowned in his passage from Chester on the Irish Seas, 1637; and by occasion foretells the ruin of our corrupted Clergy, then in their height.

Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more,
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And with forced fingers rude
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter constraint and sad occasion dear
Compels me to disturb your season due;
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.
Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.
Begin then, Sisters of the sacred well
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring;
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain and coy excuse;
So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favor my destined urn,
And, as he passes, turn
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.
For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock by fountain, shade, and rill;
Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eyelids of the morn,
We drove a-field, and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star that rose at evening bright
Toward heaven's descent had sloped his westering wheel.
Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,
Tempered to the oaten flute,

Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long;
And old Damœtas loved to hear our song.
But O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never must return!
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods and desert caves,
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes, mourn.
The willows and the hazel copses green
Shall now no more be seen,
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,
When first the white-thorn blows;
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.
Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?
For neither were ye playing on the steep
Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream.
Ay me! I fondly dream
'Had ye been there,' for what could that have done?
What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
Whom universal nature did lament,
When by the rout that made the hideous roar
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?
Alas! what boots it with uncessant care
To tend the homely, slighted, shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?
Were it not better done, as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)

To scorn delights and live laborious days;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with the abhorrèd shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"
Phœbus replied, and touched my trembling ears:
"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistering foil
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumor lies;
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed."
O fountain Arethuse, and thou honored flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood:
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the herald of the sea,
That came in Neptune's plea.
He asked the waves, and asked the felon winds,
What hard mishap hath doomed this gentle swain?
And questioned every gust of rugged wings
That blows from off each beakèd promontory:
They knew not of his story;
And sage Hippotadés their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed;
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panopé with all her sisters played.
It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in the eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.
Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe.
"Ah! who hath reft," quoth he, "my dearest pledge?"
Last came, and last did go,
The pilot of the Galilean lake;

Two massy keys he bore of metals twain
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain).
He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake:
"How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
Enow of such, as for their bellies' sake
Creep and intrude and climb into the fold!
Of other care they little reckoning make
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest.
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learned aught else the least
That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!
What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;
And, when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But, swoln with wind and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread;
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said;
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."
Return, Alphéus; the dread voice is past
That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells and flowerets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honeyed showers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,

And every flower that sad embroidery wears;
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffodillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.
For so, to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise,
Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled;
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great vision of the guarded mount
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold:
Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth;
And O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.
Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor;
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of Him that walked the waves,
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the saints above,
In solemn troops and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals gray;
He touched the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay:
And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the western bay.
At last he rose, and twitched his mantle blue:
To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new.

PARADISE LOST

(*Selections*)

Book I

Man's disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise, wherein he was placed.

Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, Heavenly Muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed
In the beginning how the Heavens and Earth
Rose out of Chaos: or, if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God, I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first
Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast Abyss,
And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support;

That to the height of this great argument
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.

The cause of Man's fall, Satan, had previously revolted from God; him and all his legions of angels God had driven out of Heaven into the great deep.

Him the Almighty Power
Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition; there to dwell
In adamantine chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space that measures day and night
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded, though immortal. But his doom
Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes,
That witnessed huge affliction and dismay,
Mixed with obdurate pride and steadfast hate.
At once, as far as Angels ken, he views
The dismal situation waste and wild:
A dungeon horrible on all sides round
As one great furnace flamed; yet from those flames
No light; but rather darkness visible
Served only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all, but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed.
Such place Eternal Justice had prepared
For those rebellious.

Satan and Beëlzebub, lying on the burning lake, confer of their miserable fall. They end their speech.

Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate,
With head uplift above the wave, and eyes

That sparkling blazed; his other parts besides,
Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian, or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,
Briareos or Typhon, whom the den
By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim the ocean-stream.

. . . . .

Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature; on each hand the flames
Driven backward slope their pointing spires, and, rolled
In billows, leave i' the midst a horrid vale.
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air,
That felt unusual weight; till on dry land
He lights — if it were land that ever burned
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire.

. . . . .

"Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,"
Said then the lost Archangel, "this the seat
That we must change for Heaven? this mournful gloom
For that celestial light? Be it so, since he
Who now is sovran can dispose and bid
What shall be right: farthest from him is best,
Whom reason hath equalled, force hath made supreme
Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,
Where joy forever dwells! Hail, horrors! hail,
Infernal world! and thou, profoundest Hell,
Receive thy new possessor, one who brings
A mind not to be changed by place or time.
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.
What matter where, if I be still the same,
And what I should be, all but less than he
Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least

We shall be free; the Almighty hath not built
Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:
Here we may reign secure, and, in my choice,
To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell:
Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven.

Beëlzebub counsels Satan to arouse his legions who lie confounded on the burning lake.

He scarce had ceased when the superior Fiend
Was moving toward the shore; his ponderous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,
Behind him cast. The broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At evening from the top of Fesole,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
Rivers, or mountains, in her spotty globe.
His spear — to equal which the tallest pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
Of some great ammiral, were but a wand —
He walked with, to support uneasy steps
Over the burning marle, not like those steps
On Heaven's azure; and the torrid clime
Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire.
Nathless he so endured, till on the beach
Of that inflamèd sea he stood, and called
His legions, angel forms, who lay entranced,
Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where the Etrurian shades
High over-arched embower; or scattered sedge
Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion armed
Hath vexed the Red Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
Busiris and his Memphian chivalry,
While with perfidious hatred they pursued
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
From the safe shore their floating carcases
And broken chariot-wheels: so thick bestrewn,
Abject and lost, lay these, covering the flood,
Under amazement of their hideous change.

At the lost archangel's call the legions rise; their number, their array of battle, and their leaders are described; Satan reviews the multitude.

He through the armèd files
Darts his experienced eye, and soon traverse
The whole battalion views — their order due,
Their visages and stature as of gods;
Their number last he sums. And now his heart
Distends with pride, and hardening in his strength
Glories; for never, since created man,
Met such embodied force as, named with these,
Could merit more than that small infantry
Warred on by cranes: though all the giant brood
Of Phlegra with the heroic race were joined
That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
Mixed with auxiliar gods; and what resounds
In fable or romance of Uther's son,
Begirt with British and Armoric knights;
And all who since, baptized or infidel,
Jousted in Aspramont, or Montalban,
Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisond;
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore
When Charlemain with all his peerage fell
By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observed
Their dread commander. He, above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tower; his form had yet not lost
All her original brightness, nor appeared
Less than Archangel ruined, and the excess
Of glory obscured: as when the sun new-risen
Looks through the horizontal misty air
Shorn of his beams, or from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs. Darkened so, yet shone
Above them all the Archangel; but his face
Deep scars of thunder had intrenched, and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows

Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
Waiting revenge.

Satan's address to the host.

" O myriads of immortal Spirits! O Powers
Matchless, but with the Almighty! and that strife
Was not inglorious, though the event was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change,
Hateful to utter. But what power of mind,
Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth
Of knowledge past or present, could have feared
How such united force of gods, how such
As stood like these, could ever know repulse?
For who can yet believe, though after loss,
That all these puissant legions, whose exile
Hath emptied Heaven, shall fail to reascend,
Self-raised, and repossess their native seat?
For me, be witness all the host of Heaven,
If counsels different, or dangers shunned
By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns
Monarch in Heaven, till then as one secure
Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
Consent or custom, and his regal state
Put forth at full, but still his strength concealed;
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,
So as not either to provoke, or dread
New war provoked. Our better part remains
To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
What force effected not; that he no less
At length from us may find, who overcomes
By force hath overcome but half his foe.
Space may produce new worlds; whereof so rife
There went a fame in Heaven that he erelong
Intended to create, and therein plant
A generation whom his choice regard
Should favor equal to the Sons of Heaven.
Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps

Our first eruption — thither, or elsewhere;
For this infernal pit shall never hold
Celestial Spirits in bondage, nor the Abyss
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
Full counsel must mature. Peace is despaired,
For who can think submission? War, then, war
Open or understood, must be resolved."
He spake; and, to confirm his words, out-flew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze
Far round illumined Hell. Highly they raged
Against the Highest, and fierce with graspèd arms
Clashed on their sounding shields the din of war,
Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heaven.

Pandemonium, the Palace of Satan.

Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet —
Built like a temple, where pilasters round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
With golden architrave; nor did there want
Cornice or frieze, with bossy sculptures graven:
The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,
Nor great Alcairo, such magnificence
Equalled in all their glories, to enshrine
Belus or Serapis their gods, or seat
Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
In wealth and luxury. The ascending pile
Stood fixed her stately height, and straight the doors,
Opening their brazen folds, discover, wide
Within, her ample spaces o'er the smooth
And level pavement: from the archèd roof,
Pendent by subtle magic, many a row
Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed
With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light
As from a sky. . . .

But far within,
And in their own dimensions like themselves,
The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim
In close recess and secret conclave sat,
A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,
Frequent and full. After short silence then,
And summons read, the great consult began.

The Throne of Satan.

(*From Book II*)

High on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous East, with richest hand,
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
Satan exalted sat, by merit raised
To that bad eminence; and, from despair
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue
Vain war with Heaven.

SONNETS

II

On His Having Arrived at the Age of Twenty-three

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
Stolen on his wing my three and twentieth year!
My hasting days fly on with full career,
But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth
That I to manhood am arrived so near;
And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
That some more timely-happy spirits endu'th.
Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
It shall be still in strictest measure even
To that same lot, however mean or high,
Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heaven;
All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great Task-Master's eye.

XVI

To the Lord General Cromwell, May, 1652

ON THE PROPOSALS OF CERTAIN MINISTERS AT THE COMMITTEE FOR PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL

Cromwell, our chief of men, that through a cloud
Not of war only, but detractions rude,
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
To peace and truth thy glorious way hast ploughed,
And on the neck of crownèd Fortune proud
Hast reared God's trophies, and his work pursued,
While Darwen stream, with blood of Scots imbrued,
And Dunbar field, resounds thy praises loud,
And Worcester's laureate wreath: yet much remains
To conquer still; peace hath her victories
No less renowned than war: new foes arise,
Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains.
Help us to save free conscience from the paw
Of hireling wolves, whose gospel is their maw.

XIX

On His Blindness

When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide,
"Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?"
I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts. Who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait."

2. THE AGE OF THE RESTORATION

The year 1660 is an important date in English history and literature. Cromwell was dead, Puritanism had lost its political ascendency, the Stuarts had been reseated upon the throne, and with the cessation of the internecine struggle for power a new and modern England had sprung into life. In many ways it was a strong and self-reliant England that now arose. Science and industry took vast strides. "Reason" and "intellect" were hailed as watchwords of the coming time. Men centred their attention on the world of actual conditions rather than on that of emotional ideals and disputed rights. Though Englishmen of the mass treasured freedom and exalted self-reliance, individuality of thought and action gave place to a desire for conformity with fixed and generally approved standards. Though the Puritan leaven still worked in the lump, and always will work, the people as a whole frankly enjoyed life, and many turned to pleasures which contrasted oddly with the "otherworldliness" of the Puritan age. In the circles of court and of London society the temperance and restraint of the earlier time were only too gladly flung to the winds. The moral degradation of the king and his followers is almost beyond belief. In their estimation, to be honest and virtuous was to be held a Puritan; and the Puritans were objects of unsparing ridicule and contempt. The effect of this social revolution upon literature may be easily imagined; it was at once apparent in a debased moral tone, especially of the drama. The theatres were again thrown open, and a school of dramatists arose, vigorous and witty in style, yet unparalleled in deliberate indecency.

It must not be inferred, however, that this debasement of moral tone was the only effect of the Restoration upon literature. It was not, indeed, the principal effect. Charles II, on returning to his country, brought with him from his exile in France a taste for the literary style and literary models of the French. Literature in France, at this time the most brilliant on the continent, attached great importance to form, and was elaborating to a remarkable degree the theory and art of criticism. The poetry of England, save in the hands of Milton and a very few others, had, as we have remarked, become extravagant and fantastic in the extreme. Reform was evidently necessary; the new conditions made reform possible. Finish and neatness of expression were now desired; and the French masters of the critical art were busy devising rules by which this finish and neatness, this exactness and lucidity, might be obtained. All this

was very congenial to the newly awakened critical intellectuality of England; and the result was that the Italian influence, which had been stimulating English poetry for over two centuries and a half, now gave way to a century of influence on the part of France. We shall find poetry, during the period of French influence, correct but cold, intellectual rather than emotional, satiric and didactic rather than lyric and passionate. Towering above the group of lesser writers who devoted themselves to this new fashion of literature, stands a splendidly intellectual representative of the spirit of his time: the poet, dramatist, and critic, JOHN DRYDEN.

JOHN DRYDEN (1631–1700)

"I confess," says Dryden, "that my chief endeavors are to delight the age in which I live. If the humor of this be for low comedy, small accidents, and raillery, I will force my genius to obey it." This statement explains why John Dryden, brilliant thinker and master-critic though he was, cannot be placed with the seers of English poetry, certainly not with that highest group of those who are seers and creators in one. He was incomparably the most distinguished author of his age; but it was not an imaginative age, — therefore not an age favorable to the truest and most lasting kind of poetry. It was an age of criticism rather than of creation, and this poet reflects the spirit of his times in being a great critic rather than a great literary artist. To usher in a vital alteration of literary style was his mission. He aimed at virile thinking, subtle perhaps, but heavy never nor often profound, at accurate form, elegant diction, polished style, perfect versification — and in all these respects he succeeded admirably. The heroic couplet, which he used almost exclusively in his poems, was well suited to their aim and spirit. He was a master of satire and an adept in the sword-play of wit. But he lacks sympathetic and interpretative imagination, has but little love for nature, distrusts tenderness and emotion, and is sadly wanting in the stability which comes from fixed moral principles and high resolves. Some of his dramas display creative power, but not of the first quality. In prose he shines, and in his historical and critical judgments of literature he stands forth as the most commanding literary personality of his age.

1631–1663. — Dryden was born in Northamptonshire, of good family, and was educated, first at Westminster School, and after-

ward in Trinity College, Cambridge. Upon his graduation, in 1657, he went to London, and the next year produced some *Heroic Stanzas on the Death of Oliver Cromwell*. Two years later, however, in common with the great mass of his countrymen, his sentiments underwent a change; and on the restoration of Charles II he wrote a poem to celebrate that event.

1663–1681. — In 1663 he married, and, as a means of livelihood, began to write for the stage. Although his twenty-eight plays exhibit the vices that characterize the Restoration drama, their merit was at least sufficient to procure for him a reputation as the first dramatist of his time. The drama, however, was not completely suited to Dryden's cast of mind. Much more vital than his plays were the critical essays with which some of them were prefaced. Here the author has not only assisted in laying the foundation for modern English criticism, but has also elaborated a style which is far more like modern prose than is that of any writer before his time. In 1670 he was made Poet Laureate, with a salary of two hundred pounds a year. For the next ten years he wrote little beside his plays.

1681–1689. — In 1681, at fifty years of age, the poet entered upon his most important sphere of literary activity: he began to write satires. Of these splendid creations the first was *Absalom and Achitophel*, soon followed by *The Medal*, *MacFlecknoe*, and others; in all of them the author shows his superiority not only to the satirists of his own time, but of most times. During this period he adopted the Roman Catholic faith, and, in 1687, published the *Hind and the Panther*. In this a plea is made for the Church of Rome, which is portrayed as a milk-white hind. The reasoning is acute, and the verse musical.

1689–1700. — In 1689, on the accession of William and Mary, the poet, as a Catholic loyalist, lost his laureateship and other offices, and was again obliged to seek an income from his pen. He turned to the drama once more, but without success. His next venture was an excellent verse translation of Virgil, which he finished in 1697. Finally, in 1699, he finished his so-called *Fables*, in which the stories of Chaucer and others were paraphrased. One year later he died and was buried in Westminster Abbey, beside the tomb of Chaucer. His more valuable work as poet had all been done within the last nineteen years of his life. No other English poet, save Cowper, matured so late as he, and very few have ruled supreme as literary dictators of their time.

If we were to select for reading the most *typical* of Dryden's non-dramatic poems, it would be, no doubt, one of the satires. The

Absalom and Achitophel will liberally repay the student who is able to give mature attention to the history involved. Since the satires, however, very largely lose their flavor unless the reader is acquainted with the men and motives that inspired them, we have passed over these, and selected instead one of the two odes upon which rests Dryden's fame as a lyric poet. It will, perhaps, illustrate better than any other kind of poem the author's power of language and dexterity in versification.

ALEXANDER'S FEAST;

Or, the Power of Music

A Song in Honor of St. Cecilia's Day: 1697

I

'Twas at the royal feast for Persia won
By Philip's warlike son.
Aloft in awful state
The godlike hero sate
On his imperial throne;
His valiant peers were placed around,
Their brows with roses and with myrtles bound
(So should desert in arms be crowned).
The lovely Thais, by his side,
Sate like a blooming Eastern bride,
In flower of youth and beauty's pride.
Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.

Chorus

Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.

2

Timotheus, placed on high
Amid the tuneful quire,
With flying fingers touched the lyre;
The trembling notes ascend the sky,
And heavenly joys inspire.
The song began from Jove,
Who left his blissful seats above
(Such is the power of mighty love).
A dragon's fiery form belied the god;
Sublime on radiant spires he rode,
When he to fair Olympia pressed;
And while he sought her snowy breast,
Then round her slender waist he curled,
And stamped an image of himself, a sovereign of the world.
The listening crowd admire the lofty sound,
A present deity, they shout around;
A present deity, the vaulted roofs rebound.
With ravished ears
The monarch hears,
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

Chorus

With ravished ears
The monarch hears,
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

3

The praise of Bacchus then the sweet musician sung,
Of Bacchus ever fair, and ever young.
The jolly god in triumph comes;
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums;

Flushed with a purple grace
He shows his honest face;
Now give the hautboys breath; he comes, he comes.
Bacchus, ever fair and young,
Drinking joys did first ordain;
Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure;
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure,
Sweet is pleasure after pain.

Chorus

Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure;
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure,
Sweet is pleasure after pain.

4

Soothed with the sound the king grew vain;
Fought all his battles o'er again;
And thrice he routed all his foes, and thrice he slew the slain.
The master saw the madness rise,
His glowing cheeks, his ardent eyes;
And, while he heaven and earth defied,
Changed his hand, and checked his pride.
He chose a mournful Muse,
Soft pity to infuse;
He sung Darius great and good,
By too severe a fate
Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,
Fallen from his high estate,
And weltering in his blood;
Deserted at his utmost need
By those his former bounty fed,
On the bare earth exposed he lies,
With not a friend to close his eyes.

With downcast looks the joyless victor sate,
Revolving in his altered soul
The various turns of chance below;
And, now and then, a sigh he stole,
And tears began to flow.

Chorus

Revolving in his altered soul
The various turns of chance below;
And, now and then, a sigh he stole,
And tears began to flow.

5

The mighty master smiled to see
That love was in the next degree:
'Twas but a kindred sound to move,
For pity melts the mind to love.
Softly sweet, in Lydian measures,
Soon he soothed his soul to pleasures.
War, he sung, is toil and trouble;
Honor but an empty bubble;
Never ending, still beginning,
Fighting still, and still destroying;
If the world be worth thy winning,
Think, O think it worth enjoying:
Lovely Thais sits beside thee,
Take the good the gods provide thee.
The many rend the skies with loud applause;
So Love was crowned, but Music won the cause.
The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
Sighed and looked, and sighed again:
At length, with love and wine at once oppressed,
The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

Chorus

The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
Sighed and looked, and sighed again:
At length, with love and wine at once oppressed,
The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

6

Now strike the golden lyre again;
A louder yet, and yet a louder strain.
Break his bands of sleep asunder,
And rouse him, like a rattling peal of thunder.
Hark, hark, the horrid sound
Has raised up his head;
As awaked from the dead,
And, amazed, he stares around.
"Revenge, revenge!" Timotheus cries;
"See the Furies arise;
See the snakes that they rear,
How they hiss in their hair,
And the sparkles that flash from their eyes!
Behold a ghastly band,
Each a torch in his hand!
Those are Grecian ghosts, that in battle were slain,
And unburied remain
Inglorious on the plain:
Give the vengeance due
To the valiant crew.
Behold how they toss their torches on high,
How they point to the Persian abodes,
And glittering temples of their hostile gods."
The princes applaud with a furious joy;
And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy;
Thais led the way,
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy.

Chorus

And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy;
Thais led the way,
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy.

7

Thus, long ago,
Ere heaving bellows learned to blow,
While organs yet were mute,
Timotheus, to his breathing flute
And sounding lyre,
Could swell the soul to rage, or kindle soft desire.
At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame;
The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With Nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown before.
Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
Or both divide the crown:
He raised a mortal to the skies;
She drew an angel down.

Chorus

At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame;
The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With Nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown before.
Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
Or both divide the crown:
He raised a mortal to the skies;
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CHAPTER VI

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

1. THE CLASSICAL OR CONVENTIONAL SCHOOL

The intellectual and artificial school of poetry which, as we have said, arose not long after the accession of Charles II, continued without any considerable change through the greater part of the eighteenth century. Taste was still largely governed by precepts borrowed from France, which, in its turn, pretended to be governed by the practice of the masters of Greece and Rome. But the French cultivated few of the ancient masters, save Horace and Juvenal, and these they followed at a very decided distance. Poetry in England remained chiefly satirical, didactic, pseudo-philosophical. In their desire to avoid the extravagances of the later Elizabethans, writers carefully avoided not only the recklessly imaginative manner and the free and easy blank-verse form but even the subjects of the earlier poetry. Dramas and lyrics expressing the passions of man, his conduct in the moment of dramatic activity, his yearning for adventure and his love of nature, were discarded for critical essays in verse upon the institutions of man and the conventions of society, or stanzas of rhetorical diction and ingenious wit tinkling in the breeze of artificial emotion. The attempt of any poet to overleap the boundaries within which the set rules of the art had confined him was regarded as proof that he was really no poet. Nothing could be beautiful if irregularly beautiful. Hence individuality was repressed and writers retained scarcely any other mark of personal distinction than the degree in which wit was keen or style laboriously elegant.

The uniformity of style in the writers of this school is accentuated by the inflexibility of the verse form which had been adopted and which held almost complete sway in English poetry for over a hundred years. This was the heroic couplet, consisting of two iambic pentameter lines connected by rhyme — a form of which Macaulay says in his essay on Addison: "The art of arranging words in this measure, so that the lines may flow smoothly, that the accents may fall correctly, that the rhymes may strike the ear strongly, and that

there may be a pause at the end of every distich, is an art as mechanical as that of mending a kettle or shoeing a horse, and may be learned by any human being who has sense enough to learn anything. But, like other mechanical arts, it was gradually improved by means of many experiments and many failures. It was reserved for Pope to discover the trick, to make himself complete master of it, and to teach it to everybody else." Though Macaulay in this passage shows not a little of his characteristic dogmatism and underestimates the skill requisite to write good heroic couplets, at least two of his statements are unquestionably true: first, that ALEXANDER POPE made himself absolute master of this form of verse; and second, that many of his contemporaries imitated him. These two facts explain Pope's leadership of what a distinguished critic designates as the "artificial-conventional school of verse," with its ideals of emotional reserve and mental equipoise, its methods of formal correctness, point, and finish. The heroic couplet in which they wrote was, as we have already noticed, an old and common English measure. But in Chaucer and other poets who had early used the couplet, as well as in Keats and Swinburne and other poets of the nineteenth century who have since employed it, the thought runs on connectedly from line to line and couplet to couplet, stopping to take breath somewhere *within* a line, if it pleases, in a manner that would not have been tolerated by the rule of the end-stopped couplet and unit line used in the eighteenth century (see INTRODUCTION). The influence of Dryden's personality had been such as to popularize even rugged and vigorous couplets as a vehicle of expression. When Pope met the demands of his age, not only with couplets perfect in their sprightliness and polish, but also with phraseology unparalleled for conciseness and lucidity, he rose at once to a position of acknowledged leadership among the poets of his time.

The influences of this dictatorship were both bad and good. On the one hand, scores of writers who, as Macaulay says, "never blundered on one happy thought or expression," in their attempt to follow the lead of Pope, inflicted upon the world "reams of couplets" entirely mechanical and artificial, and utterly devoid of poetry. On the other hand, subsequent English poetry could ill afford to dispense with the characteristics indirectly derived from the manner of Pope and his disciples. These writers of the "Classical school" labored from the first for a neatness, condensation, and perfection of style, such as had hitherto been strangers to English verse, but which, once attained, have never since been wholly disregarded. No poet to-day

could write in the untrained, formless manner that marks, and frequently mars, some very excellent early Elizabethans. The influence of Pope's school remained long after the school had passed away. But, as we shall see, neither the authority of Pope in the first half of the century, nor that of his great disciple, DR. JOHNSON (1709–1784), in the latter half, was sufficient to prevent a gradual reactionary movement which, before the century was over, should again usher in the poetic ideals of Chaucer, Milton, and Spenser in place of those of Dryden, Johnson, and Pope.

ALEXANDER POPE (1688–1744)

If Wordsworth was right in saying that "all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling," Alexander Pope was certainly not a good poet. Indeed, he fails to meet almost any standard which the present day would advance as a test of what is in spirit poetic. Like his master Dryden, he cared nothing for nature, and gave it scant attention in his verse. Like Dryden also, he has little emotion, little passion, little inspiration, little power of inspiring others. He is rarely inventive or strikingly original; he pretends to no power of imagination; he does not often aim to bring a lofty message to the world. He is the poet of "the town," with its fashionable and conventional life — the "life of the court and the ballroom"; the poet of biting satire and caustic criticism; the poet of the transitory and fleeting. Yet the time has been when Alexander Pope was considered the greatest of English poets and a model for all future poetry.

If we limit our view of poetry, as above, to its *content* only, its imaginative thought and feeling, we cannot understand this verdict of the eighteenth century. But so to restrict our judgment would be manifestly unjust, for poetry resides in the form as well as in the content. In the *form* of his poetic production — its fitness, finish, and grace, its compactness of expression, its terseness of epigram, its darting wit — Pope stands almost without a rival. His ideals are absolute correctness and rigid self-criticism. He aims to express what he has to say in the very best possible form, and his success is absolute. No English writer except Shakespeare has given us so many oft-quoted and quotable lines, simply because no one else has expressed his thoughts so compactly or so well. Indeed, none of our poets has had such an influence in shaping a literary epoch as Pope had in the eighteenth century. Though the critics of to-day do not accord him a place in the highest order of poets, they rank him, like

Dryden, among the most important factors in the development of our literature.

1688–1712. — Pope was born in London in 1688. His education, since his father was a Roman Catholic, was first under the tuition of Catholic priests; after the age of twelve, however, under his own guidance. When a mere lad he resolved to devote himself to poetry; and, aided by his father's criticism, he commenced at a very early age to write. He was badly deformed and sickly all his life; whatever he has accomplished marks, therefore, the triumph of will and artistic ambition in a lifelong conflict with disease. His first published work was the *Pastorals*. These appeared when he was twenty-one, and were followed two years later by his *Essay on Criticism*, and the first cast, in two cantos, of *The Rape of the Lock*. The poet's success was immediate and unquestioned.

1712–1728. — In 1713 appeared *Windsor Forest*, and the next year the enlarged form of *The Rape of the Lock*, now ordinarily read. Shortly afterward Pope removed from Binfield, the home of his childhood, to Chiswick, and then to Twickenham, towns on the Thames, a few miles west of London. From 1715 to 1720 he was at work on a translation of Homer's *Iliad*. The result has been characterized as "a very pretty poem, but not Homer." Indeed, Pope had little knowledge of the Greek language, and very little sympathy with Homeric spirit. So, although the translation brought him money and fame, and although it is still well known, it is nevertheless a very poor medium through which to gain acquaintance with the greatest of epic poets. In 1725 a translation of the *Odyssey* appeared. Three years later, when he was forty years of age, the poet sent out from his comfortable retreat of Twickenham the *Dunciad*, a bitter satire upon the minor poets and critics who had chanced to incur his displeasure.

1728–1744. — The rest of his life was spent in writing a series of half-philosophical, half-satirical poems, which, though they may fail in value when considered as wholes, are certainly unique as armories of terse and trenchant lines. Among these poems are the famous *Essay on Man* (1732–1734) and the noblest of his poems, *The Universal Prayer* (1738); a revision and enlargement of the *Dunciad* (1743); and various epistles, satires, and miscellaneous verses. In 1744, just after his fifty-sixth birthday, Pope died. His friends and early admirers had nearly all preceded him to the grave, or, if still living, were estranged by his irritability, his jealousy and suspicion. At the time of his death his keenness and his vital powers were clearly on the

wane; disease was making inroads upon his feeble body. The end, under such conditions, was probably not unwelcome.

It is no easy matter to select from the works of Pope the parts which are best deserving study. The epistles and satires depend for their appreciation upon an acquaintance with the circumstances that called them forth. The *Essay on Man*, despite its brilliant lines and passages, appears superficial to readers of to-day. *The Rape of the Lock*, however, requires for an enjoyment of its sparkling and fanciful wit no unreasonably minute acquaintance with the personalities or scenes involved; and since it is probably the most highly finished of Pope's purely fanciful creations and one of the finest mock-heroic poems ever written, we have selected it. To insert here the whole of it would be to give Pope an almost undue importance. To present only one or two cantos, on the other hand, would be merely to spoil a delightful story. We have, therefore, decided to reproduce the poem as it was first printed in *Lintot's Miscellany* (1712), — the form that made its author famous, and that Addison termed "*merum sal*" — pure wit. When Pope proposed to enlarge the first edition of *The Rape of the Lock*, Addison advised against the suggestion, and by so doing turned Pope from a warm friend to a bitter enemy, for the well-meant advice was interpreted as proceeding from jealousy. The enlargement has added, to be sure, several clever pictures, and is one of the most successful revisions ever made of a great poem. Still, many will be found to agree with Addison and with Mr. Croker, a well-known critic of Pope, who says: "The original poem tells the actual story and exhibits a picture of real manners with so much wit and poetry, but also with so much simplicity and clearness, that I can well imagine that Addison might be alarmed at the proposition of introducing sylphs and gnomes into a scene of common life already so admirably described. Even now, with the advantage of seeing all the brilliancy with which Pope has worked out what Addison thought an unfortunate conception, I will not deny that such is the charm of truth that I have lately read the first sketch with more interest than its more fanciful and more gorgeous successor, which really seems something like a beauty oppressed with the weight and splendor of her ornaments."

Indeed, we believe that this shorter form of the poem will prove in many ways more suitable to the needs of the student than its longer, more difficult, more fantastic, and in places somewhat wearisome revision. One must remember, however, that this shorter edition, though furnishing an excellent example of Pope at his best, is not what

is now ordinarily called *The Rape of the Lock*. Should the student wish to study the whole poem, he will do well to compare this earlier with the enlarged form, to be found in any collection of its author's works. He will notice that three or four lines were omitted in the revision; a dozen or so recast and considerably changed; some thirty or forty very slightly altered, often in only a single word; and about four hundred and sixty added, principally in the introduction of such "machinery" as the Sylphs, the game of Ombre, and the Cave of Spleen. These changes may be summarized as follows, no account being made of merely verbal or minor changes: —

Final edition Canto	*No. of lines*	*Contains of the earlier edition*	*And adds*
I	148	Canto I, ll. 1–18	— the description of the Sylphs and of Belinda's toilet.
II	142	Canto I, ll. 19–64	— the plans of the Sylphs.
III	178	Canto I, ll. 65–142	— the game of Ombre.
IV	176	Canto II, ll. 143–231	— the Gnomes and the Cave of Spleen.
V	150	Canto II, ll. 232–334	— the Speech of Clarissa.[1]

THE RAPE OF THE LOCK

An Heroi-comical Poem

[ORIGINAL EDITION OF 1712]

Nolueram, Belinda, tuos violare capillos,
Sed juvat hoc precibus me tribuisse tuis.
— Martial's Epigrams: Lib. XII, Ep. 84.

CANTO I

What dire offense from amorous causes springs,
What mighty quarrels rise from trivial things,
I sing. This verse to C——l, Muse! is due;
This, even Belinda may vouchsafe to view;
Slight is the subject, but not so the praise,
If she inspire, and he approve my lays.

[1] First introduced into the quarto edition of 1717. Canto V, of the edition of 1714, save for a few lines relating to the Sylphs, was practically identical with the last hundred lines of the first edition. The final edition, as it now stands, contains seven hundred and ninety-four lines.

Say what strange motive, Goddess! could compel
A well-bred Lord t' assault a gentle belle?
O say what stranger cause, yet unexplored,
Could make a gentle belle reject a lord?
And dwells such rage in softest bosoms then,
And lodge such daring souls in little men?
Sol through white curtains did his beams display,
And oped those eyes which brighter shine than they;
Shock just had given himself the rousing shake,
And nymphs prepared their chocolate to take;
Thrice the wrought slipper knocked against the ground,
And striking watches the tenth hour resound.
Belinda rose, and midst attending dames,
Launched on the bosom of the Silver Thames:
A train of well-dressed youths around her shone,
And every eye was fixed on her alone.
On her white breast a sparkling cross she wore,
Which Jews might kiss, and infidels adore.
Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose,
Quick as her eyes, and as unfixed as those.
Favors to none, to all she smiles extends;
Oft she rejects, but never once offends.
Bright as the sun, her eyes the gazers strike,
And, like the sun, they shine on all alike.
Yet graceful ease, and sweetness void of pride,
Might hide her faults, if belles had faults to hide;
If to her share some female errors fall,
Look on her face, and you'll forgive 'em all.
This nymph, to the destruction of mankind,
Nourished two locks, which graceful hung behind
In equal curls, and well conspired to deck
With shining ringlets her smooth ivory neck.
Love in these labyrinths his slaves detains,
And mighty hearts are held in slender chains.
With hairy springes we the birds betray,
Slight lines of hair surprise the finny prey,
Fair tresses man's imperial race ensnare,
And beauty draws us with a single hair.

Th' adventurous baron the bright locks admired;
He saw, he wished, and to the prize aspired.
Resolved to win, he meditates the way,
By force to ravish, or by fraud betray;
For when success a lover's toil attends,
Few ask if fraud or force attained his ends.

For this, ere Phœbus rose, he had implored
Propitious heaven, and every power adored,
But chiefly Love — to Love an altar built
Of twelve vast French romances, neatly gilt.
There lay the sword-knot Sylvia's hands had sewn,
With Flavia's busk that oft had wrapped his own:
A fan, a garter, half a pair of gloves,
And all the trophies of his former loves.
With tender billets-doux he lights the pyre,
And breathes three amorous sighs to raise the fire.
Then prostrate falls, and begs with ardent eyes
Soon to obtain, and long possess the prize:
The powers gave ear, and granted half his prayer;
The rest the winds dispersed in empty air.

Close by those meads, for ever crowned with flowers,
Where Thames with pride surveys his rising towers,
There stands a structure of majestic frame,
Which from the neighboring Hampton takes its name.
Here Britain's statesmen oft the fall foredoom
Of foreign tyrants and of nymphs at home;
Here thou, great ANNA! whom three realms obey,
Dost sometimes counsel take — and sometimes tea.

Hither our nymphs and heroes did resort,
To taste a while the pleasures of a court:
In various talk the cheerful hours they passed,
Of who was bit, or who capotted last:
This speaks the glory of the British Queen,
And that describes a charming Indian screen;
A third interprets motions, looks, and eyes;
At every word a reputation dies.
Snuff, or the fan, supply each pause of chat,
With singing, laughing, ogling, and all that.

Now when, declining from the noon of day,
The sun obliquely shoots his burning ray;
When hungry judges soon the sentence sign,
And wretches hang that jury-men may dine;
When merchants from th' Exchange return in peace,
And the long labors of the toilet cease,
The board's with cups and spoons, alternate, crowned,
The berries crackle, and the mill turns round;
On shining altars of Japan they raise
The silver lamp; the fiery spirits blaze;
From silver spouts the grateful liquors glide,
While China's earth receives the smoking tide.
At once they gratify their smell and taste,
While frequent cups prolong the rich repast.
Coffee (which makes the politician wise,
And see through all things with his half-shut eyes)
Sent up in vapors to the baron's brain
New stratagems, the radiant lock to gain.
Ah cease, rash youth! desist ere 'tis too late,
Fear the just gods, and think of Scylla's fate!
Changed to a bird, and sent to flit in air,
She dearly pays for Nisus' injured hair!
But when to mischief mortals bend their mind,
How soon fit instruments of ill they find!
Just then Clarissa drew with tempting grace
A two-edged weapon from her shining case:
So ladies, in romance, assist their knight,
Present the spear, and arm him for the fight.
He takes the gift with reverence, and extends
The little engine on his fingers' ends;
This just behind Belinda's neck he spread,
As o'er the fragrant steams she bends her head.
He first expands the glittering forfex wide
T' inclose the lock, now joins it to divide;
One fatal stroke the sacred hair does sever
From the fair head, for ever and for ever!
The living fires come flashing from her eyes,
And screams of horror rend th' affrighted skies.

Not louder shrieks by dames to heaven are cast,
When husbands die, or lapdogs breathe their last;
Or when rich China vessels, fallen from high,
In glittering dust and painted fragments lie!
"Let wreaths of triumph now my temples twine,"
The victor cried; "the glorious prize is mine!
While fish in streams, or birds delight in air,
Or in a coach and six the British fair,
As long as Atalantis shall be read,
Or the small pillow grace a lady's bed,
While visits shall be paid on solemn days,
When numerous waxlights in bright order blaze,
While nymphs take treats, or assignations give,
So long my honor, name, and praise shall live!
What Time would spare, from steel receives its date,
And monuments, like men, submit to fate!
Steel did the labor of the gods destroy,
And strike to dust th' aspiring towers of Troy;
Steel could the works of mortal pride confound,
And hew triumphal arches to the ground.
What wonder then, fair nymph! thy hairs should feel
The conquering force of unresisted steel!"

CANTO II

But anxious cares the pensive nymph oppressed,
And secret passions labored in her breast.
Not youthful kings in battle seized alive,
Not scornful virgins who their charms survive,
Not ardent lover robbed of all his bliss,
Not ancient lady when refused a kiss,
Not tyrants fierce that unrepenting die,
Not Cynthia when her manteau's pinned awry,
E'er felt such rage, resentment, and despair,
As thou, sad virgin! for thy ravished hair.
While her racked soul repose and peace requires,
The fierce Thalestris fans the rising fires.
"O wretched maid!" she spread her hands, and cried,
(And Hampton's echoes "Wretched maid!" replied)

" Was it for this you took such constant care
Combs, bodkins, leads, pomatums to prepare?
For this your locks in paper durance bound?
For this torturing irons wreathed around?
Oh had the youth been but content to seize
Hairs less in sight, or any hairs but these!
Gods! shall the ravisher display this hair,
While the fops envy, and the ladies stare!
Honor forbid! at whose unrivalled shrine
Ease, pleasure, virtue, all our sex resign.
Methinks already I your tears survey,
Already hear the horrid things they say,
Already see you a degraded toast,
And all your honor in a whisper lost!
How shall I, then, your helpless fame defend?
'Twill then be infamy to seem your friend!
And shall this prize, th' inestimable prize,
Exposed through crystal to the gazing eyes,
And heightened by the diamond's circling rays,
On that rapacious hand for ever blaze?
Sooner shall grass in Hyde Park Circus grow,
And wits take lodgings in the sound of Bow;
Sooner let earth, air, sea, to chaos fall,
Men, monkeys, lapdogs, parrots, perish all!"
She said; then raging to Sir Plume repairs,
And bids her beau demand the precious hairs:
Sir Plume, of amber snuff-box justly vain,
And the nice conduct of a clouded cane,
With earnest eyes, and round unthinking face,
He first the snuff-box opened, then the case,
And thus broke out — " My lord! why, what the devil!
Zounds! damn the lock! 'fore Gad, you must be civil!
Plague on't! 'tis past a jest — nay, prithee, pox!
Give her the hair " — he spoke, and rapped his box.
" It grieves me much," replied the peer again,
" Who speaks so well should ever speak in vain;
But by this lock, this sacred lock, I swear,
(Which never more shall join its parted hair;

Which never more its honors shall renew,
Clipped from the lovely head where once it grew)
That, while my nostrils draw the vital air,
This hand, which won it, shall for ever wear."
He spoke; and speaking, in proud triumph spread
The long-contended honors of her head.

But see! the nymph in sorrow's pomp appears,
Her eyes half-languishing, half drowned in tears;
Now livid pale her cheeks, now glowing red,
On her heaved bosom hung her drooping head,
Which, with a sigh, she raised; and thus she said:
"For ever cursed be this detested day,
Which snatched my best, my favorite curl away!
Happy! ah ten times happy had I been,
If Hampton Court these eyes had never seen!
Yet am not I the first mistaken maid,
By love of courts to numerous ills betrayed.
Oh, had I rather unadmired remained
In some lone isle, or distant northern land,
Where the gilt chariot never marks the way,
Where none learn ombre, none e'er taste bohea!
There kept my charms concealed from mortal eye,
Like roses, that in deserts bloom and die.
What moved my mind with youthful lords to roam?
Oh had I stayed, and said my prayers at home!
'Twas this the morning omens did foretell;
Thrice from my trembling hand the patch-box fell;
The tottering china shook without a wind;
Nay, Poll sat mute, and Shock was most unkind!
See the poor remnants of this slighted hair!
My hands shall rend what e'en thy own did spare:
This, in two sable ringlets taught to break,
Once gave new beauties to the snowy neck;
The sister lock now sits uncouth, alone,
And in its fellow's fate foresees its own;
Uncurled it hangs, the fatal shears demands,
And tempts once more thy sacrilegious hands."

She said; the pitying audience melt in tears;

But Fate and Jove had stopped the baron's ears.
In vain Thalestris with reproach assails;
For who can move when fair Belinda fails?
Not half so fixed the Trojan could remain,
While Anna begged and Dido raged in vain.
"To arms, to arms!" the bold Thalestris cries,
And swift as lightning to the combat flies.
All side in parties, and begin th' attack;
Fans clap, silks rustle, and tough whalebones crack;
Heroes' and Hêroines' shouts confusedly rise,
And base and treble voices strike the skies.
No common weapons in their hands are found;
Like gods they fight, nor dread a mortal wound.
So when bold Homer makes the gods engage,
And heavenly breasts with human passions rage;
'Gainst Pallas, Mars; Latona, Hermes arms;
And all Olympus rings with loud alarms;
Jove's thunder roars, heaven trembles all around;
Blue Neptune storms, the bellowing deeps resound;
Earth shakes her nodding towers, the ground gives way,
And the pale ghosts start at the flash of day!
While through the press enraged Thalestris flies,
And scatters death around from both her eyes,
A beau and witling perished in the throng;
One died in metaphor, and one in song.
"O cruel nymph! a living death I bear,"
Cried Dapperwit, and sunk beside his chair.
A mournful glance Sir Fopling upwards cast:
"Those eyes are made so killing" — was his last.
Thus on Mæander's flowery margin lies
Th' expiring swan, and as he sings he dies.
As bold Sir Plume had drawn Clarissa down,
Chloe stepped in, and killed him with a frown;
She smiled to see the doughty hero slain,
But at her smile the beau revived again.
Now Jove suspends his golden scales in air,
Weighs the men's wits against the lady's hair.
The doubtful beam long nods from side to side;

At length the wits mount up, the hairs subside.
See, fierce Belinda on the baron flies,
With more than usual lightning in her eyes;
Nor feared the chief th' unequal fight to try,
Who sought no more than on his foe to die.
But this bold lord, with manly strength endued,
She with one finger and a thumb subdued:
Just where the breath of life his nostrils drew,
A charge of snuff the wily virgin threw;
Sudden, with starting tears each eye o'erflows,
And the high dome re-echoes to his nose.
"Now meet thy fate," th' incensed virago cried,
And drew a deadly bodkin from her side.
"Boast not my fall," he said, "insulting foe!
Thou by some other shalt be laid as low;
Nor think to die dejects my lofty mind;
All that I dread is leaving you behind!
Rather than so, ah let me still survive,
And still burn on in Cupid's flames, — alive."
"Restore the lock!" she cries; and all around
"Restore the lock!" the vaulted roofs rebound.
Not fierce Othello in so loud a strain
Roared for the handkerchief that caused his pain.
But see how oft ambitious aims are crossed,
And chiefs contend till all the prize is lost!
The lock, obtained with guilt, and kept with pain,
In every place is sought, but sought in vain:
With such a prize no mortal must be blest,
So heaven decrees! with heaven who can contest?
Some thought it mounted to the lunar sphere,
Since all that man e'er lost is treasured there.
There heroes' wits are kept in ponderous vases,
And beaux' in snuff-boxes and tweezer-cases.
There broken vows and death-bed alms are found,
And lovers' hearts with ends of riband bound,
The courtier's promises, and sick man's prayers,
The smiles of harlots, and the tears of heirs,
Cages for gnats, and chains to yoke a flea,

Dried butterflies, and tomes of casuistry.
But trust the Muse — she saw it upward rise,
Though marked by none but quick poetic eyes;
(Thus Rome's great founder to the heavens withdrew,
To Proculus alone confessed in view).
A sudden star, it shot through liquid air,
And drew behind a radiant trail of hair.
Not Berenice's locks first rose so bright,
The skies bespangling with dishevelled light.
This the beau monde shall from the Mall survey,
As through the moonlight shade they nightly stray,
And hail with music its propitious ray;
This Partridge soon shall view in cloudless skies,
When next he looks through Galileo's eyes;
And hence th' egregious wizard shall foredoom
The fate of Louis, and the fall of Rome.
Then cease, bright nymph! to mourn thy ravished hair,
Which adds new glory to the shining sphere!
Not all the tresses that fair head can boast,
Shall draw such envy as the lock you lost:
For after all the murders of your eye,
When, after millions slain, yourself shall die;
When those fair suns shall set, as set they must,
And all those tresses shall be laid in dust,
This lock the Muse shall consecrate to fame,
And 'midst the stars inscribe Belinda's name.

THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER

Father of all! in every age,
In every clime adored,
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!

Thou Great First Cause, least understood:
Who all my sense confined
To know but this, that Thou art good,
And that myself am blind;

Yet gave me, in this dark estate,
To see the good from ill;
And binding nature fast in fate,
Left free the human will.

What conscience dictates to be done,
Or warns me not to do,
This, teach me more than Hell to shun,
That, more than Heaven pursue.

What blessings Thy free bounty gives,
Let me not cast away;
For God is paid when man receives,
T' enjoy is to obey.

Yet not to earth's contracted span
Thy goodness let me bound,
Or think Thee Lord alone of man,
When thousand worlds are round:

Let not this weak, unknowing hand
Presume Thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation round the land,
On each I judge Thy foe.

If I am right, Thy grace impart
Still in the right to stay;
If I am wrong, oh! teach my heart
To find that better way.

Save me alike from foolish pride
Or impious discontent,
At aught Thy wisdom has denied
Or aught Thy goodness lent.

Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.

Mean though I am, not wholly so,
Since quickened by Thy breath;
Oh, lead me wheresoe'er I go,
Through this day's life or death.

This day, be bread and peace my lot:
All else beneath the sun,
Thou know'st if best bestowed or not,
And let Thy will be done.

To Thee, whose temple is all space,
Whose altar earth, sea, skies,
One chorus let all being raise,
All nature's incense rise!

2. THE MOVEMENT OF REACTION

Although the mention of eighteenth-century English poetry is generally suggestive of the conventional school of Pope and Johnson, it must be noted that contemporaneous with this school, almost from the very beginning of the century, there was proceeding another literary movement, destined in time to bring about a revolution in English letters as great as that which had resulted in the ascendency of the Classical school. This movement was fostered by a few poets, who, consciously or unconsciously, could not or would not be bound by the tenets of this school. Some of these poets discarded the heroic couplet and reverted to the verse forms as well as the poetic ideals of earlier English and North-European poetry; some, indeed, to the inspiration of the ancient classics. Others clung to the couplet and no doubt imagined that they were wholly in accord with the conventionalists, although their poetic sympathies were such as could never be satisfied with the ideals of Pope and his disciples. Passion, imagination, love of nature — all of which had fallen into disrepute — little by little reasserted themselves in the works of such writers; and thus very slowly, indefinitely, almost imperceptibly at first, the new poetry arose. For a new poetry it was, although until the time of Burns it was to a large degree held in check by the dominant authority of the other school.

The course of this movement in the history of eighteenth-century letters may be indicated by a brief mention of some of the more im-

portant poets concerned. The first to attain to any prominence was a Scotchman, JAMES THOMSON (1700–1748). Of him Saintsbury says in his *History of English Poetry:* "Thomson's poetical works are among the most important in the history of English poetry, although they cannot be exactly ranked among the best of English poems. Appearing as they did at the very same time with the most perfect and polished work of Pope, they served as an antidote to that great writer's 'town' poetry. Couched as the best of them were in blank verse, or in the Spenserian stanza, they showed a bold front to the insolent domination of the stopped couplet." Thomson's *Seasons* (1726–1730), although written largely in the formal, rhetorical language of the Classical school, nevertheless differs widely from that school in showing an "honest understanding" and sincere love of nature. Equally important as an influence in the new direction was the work of THOMAS GRAY. It is true that his poems are by no means free from the coldness and artificiality of the age; yet his gentle sympathy with man and nature, together with his ripe scholarship and intimate acquaintance with the best in the poetry of other lands, contributed to make him an inspirer of the new poetry rather than a confirmer of the old. As Stopford Brooke has said: "He stands clear and bright on the ridge between the old and the new. Having ascended through the old poetry, he saw the new landscape of song below him, felt its fresher air, and sent his own power into the men who arose after him." With Gray closes what may be regarded as the first period of the reactionary movement.

The opening of its second period is marked by three matters of import: first, the comparative barrenness of poetic achievement during the third quarter of the century; second, the renewal of interest in the romance of past ages, as evidenced by the successful publication of Bishop Percy's *Reliques of Ancient Poetry;* and third, the literary dictatorship of Dr. Johnson, an ardent follower of Pope and a zealous advocate of the ideals of the Classical school. The conservatism of Johnson undoubtedly had much influence over the work of his intimate friend and companion, OLIVER GOLDSMITH. Indeed, Goldsmith is often classed among the conventional poets of the century. No doubt he tried to meet the requirements of the conventional school; no doubt he wrote some poems with a purpose as consciously didactic as was ever that of Pope. But the spirit of the artist was more potent than the purpose of the artificer; in spite of his heroic couplets and attempts at moralizing, in spite of Dr. Johnson and of his own adherence to conventional poetic theories, Goldsmith's truer instincts place him among the poets of the newer school.

During the latter years of this period of reaction the last taper of the conventional school flickered and went out. GEORGE CRABBE (1754–1832) and WILLIAM COWPER (1731–1800), like Goldsmith, both counted themselves of the tribe of Pope. Both used the regulation couplet; both tried to write in the regulation manner. But the sincere and realistic products of the Muse demonstrated the futility of clinging to a style from which the soul had escaped. Utterly free of literary conventions and entirely devoted to romantic beauty and mystic vision was the eccentric poet and painter, WILLIAM BLAKE (1757–1827). Finally ROBERT BURNS, in his matchless songs, gave voice to strains such as for simplicity and sweetness had not been heard since the best days of the Elizabethans. Even he, when he exchanged his native dialect for literary English, at times showed curious traces of the earlier school; but, on the whole, the differences between Pope, who opened the century, and Burns, who closed it, are nearly world-wide. The forces of reaction had completed their work, and England was ready for the new Romantic school.

THOMAS GRAY (1716–1771)

The quiet, sober-minded Thomas Gray is frequently classed with Milton among the most scholarly of English poets. Gray's life was given almost entirely to self-culture. Probably no other man of his time in all Europe was so well read in modern literature, and few had a more intimate knowledge of the classics. As a result of this wide range of reading, he had developed a critical insight that might have contributed much to making him a great poet; but in Gray the creative impulse was largely lacking. If, like Pope or Wordsworth or Tennyson, he had resolutely confined himself to writing poetry, his rank as a poet would doubtless have been far higher than it is. His mind was clear and searching, his taste refined — almost fastidious, his power of expression of extraordinary fitness and finish. Though of no great imagination or originality, he was one of the first to achieve at least a partial emancipation from the thraldom of the Classical school. In spite of his talents, however, he is a poet only of the presentative or reflective class; yet one whom the world will never forget as the author of the *Elegy* — a production of sentiment dignified and temperate rather than profound, yet so wide in its appeal and so nearly perfect in expression that it is perhaps the best known and best loved poem in the English language.

1716–1741. — Gray was born in London in December, 1716. His father, though a man of some wealth, was extravagant, intemperate, and cruelly indifferent to his family. Hence the nurture and education of the youth devolved entirely on the mother. Young Gray became a pupil in Eton, where his mother's brother was a teacher, and thence he proceeded to Cambridge, which he entered at the age of eighteen. Four years later he left the university without taking a degree, and with Horace Walpole, a fellow-student at both Eton and Cambridge, began a tour of the Continent which lasted till 1741.

1741–1754. — Gray's father died in 1741, after having squandered nearly all his fortune. Accordingly the next year the poet's mother moved to the home of her widowed sister, at the village of Stoke Pogis, in southern Buckinghamshire, and was soon joined by her son. Here Gray wrote his first English poems, the *Ode to Spring*, the *Eton College* ode, and the beginnings of the *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, the latter probably suggested by the churchyard near his new home in Stoke Pogis. During the winter of this same year, 1742, he returned to Cambridge, took the degree of Bachelor of Civil Law, and settled down to a dreamy life of study in the libraries of the university, varied only by vacation visits to his mother, and occasional trips abroad. In 1747 his *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College* was published, but it met with little favor. The *Elegy*, on which he had been working at intervals since 1742, appeared in 1750. Three years later his mother died, and he became more than ever the solitary recluse of the Cambridge libraries.

1754–1771. — From 1754 to 1757 Gray produced some few short poems, among them his well-known Pindaric Odes (see INTRODUCTION). In 1757 he was offered the laureateship, an honor which he refused. Not long after this he began to write translations and imitations of the poetry of the Celts and the Norsemen, — translations which had a decided influence in the development of the new Romantic movement. The remaining years of his life were even more uneventful than those which had preceded. In 1768 he was given the professorship of Modern History and Modern Languages at Cambridge, but he never delivered a lecture. In 1771 the " shy, sensitive, secluded scholar " died, and was buried beside his mother in the " country churchyard " of Stoke Pogis.

According to Gray's own statement, he aimed at a style with " extreme conciseness of expression, yet pure, perspicuous, and musical." In this he has succeeded so admirably that almost any one of his few poems is well worth the reader's acquaintance. On the whole,

the most enjoyable are probably his "odes," such as *The Bard* and that on *Eton College*, and the famous *Elegy* which follows. The romantic quality which these poems show is manifest not merely in the breaking away from the heroic couplet, but in the poet's sympathy with low-born and natural life, simple emotions, and homely scenes.

ELEGY

Written in a Country Churchyard

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

Save that, from yonder ivy-mantled tower,
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care;
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike th' inevitable hour.
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye Proud, impute to these the fault,
If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn, or animated bust,
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honor's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to extasy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village-Hampden, that, with dauntless breast,
The little Tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade: nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet even these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unlettered Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply;
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies;
Some pious drops the closing eye requires:
Even from the tomb the voice of Nature cries;
Even in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who mindful of th' unhonored Dead
Dost in these lines their artless tales relate;
If chance, by lonely Contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
"Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

"There at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

"Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Mutt'ring his wayward fancies he would rove;
Now drooping woeful wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

"One morn I missed him on the customed hill,
Along the heath and near his favorite tree;
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

"The next, with dirges due in sad array,
Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne. —
Approach and read (for thou can'st read) the lay
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."

THE EPITAPH

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth,
A youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown:
Fair Science frowned not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy marked him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
Heaven did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to Misery all he had, a tear,
He gained from Heaven ('twas all he wished) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH (1728–1774)

Oliver Goldsmith, if not the greatest, is at least the most versatile and pleasing writer of the eighteenth century. Whether as essay writer or dramatist, poet or novelist, he put his hand to nothing that he did not impress with a certain indefinable charm. Of critical faculty or accurate knowledge he had almost nothing, nor was he by any means a deep thinker. Yet he was easy, simple, and natural; and, as Irving suggests, he identified himself with his writings in such a way as to make us "love the man at the same time that we admire the author." His style has been well characterized as full of "humanity and grace, of simplicity and picturesque sweetness." His life was a singular mixture of comedy and pathos, and has always been a favorite theme of essayist and biographer. We can give here only the briefest outline.

1728–1752. — Goldsmith was born in 1728, in Pallas, a small Irish village where his father was a poor Protestant clergyman. Two years later the family moved to the village of Lissoy, and here the boy received his early schooling, some reflection of which we find in *The Deserted Village*. At the age of seventeen he entered Trinity College, Dublin, as a sizar, or charity student. He seems to have been shiftless at college, but was finally graduated at the age of twenty-one, the lowest in his class. The next three years he spent ostensibly in preparation for holy orders, but really in idleness.

1752–1759. — Goldsmith's uncle, who had helped him through college, now gave him fifty pounds with which to enter upon the study of law in London; but Oliver proceeded in this career no farther than Dublin, where he gambled away his money in a single night. The uncle again to the rescue, Oliver then tried his hand at medicine, and

spent two years at Edinburgh, afterwards two more strolling from university to university on the continent, in pursuit of a warrant to practise. Finally, somewhere in Italy, he succeeded in capturing a medical degree — at least so he asserts — and he was thereafter "Dr. Goldsmith." We now see Goldsmith, at the age of twenty-eight, back from his travels and trying in every conceivable way to make a living, — as apothecary's assistant, as tutor in a school, and, finally, as hack reviewer for a bookseller. Thus his energies were at last directed into their proper channel, for in the intervals of his hack-work he succeeded in writing, and even publishing, his *Enquiry into the State of Polite Learning in Europe*. With this naïvely pretentious essay, about a subject of which he knew next to nothing, his career as an author commenced.

1759–1774. — During the later years of his life, amid any quantity of literary drudgery — a *History of England*, a *History of Animated Nature*, and the like — he found time to produce several works which were real literature, — some genial and sprightly essays, two very good poems beside other worthy bits of verse, two comedies which still stir the world with laughter and delight, and an idyllic romance whose charm can never grow old. He was an honored member of the famous literary club of Dr. Johnson and his friends. He earned at times considerable sums of money, but through personal extravagance and reckless generosity he was constantly in debt. Yet he was never so poor but that he would lend his last penny to some Irish relative poorer still. His affectionate and confiding nature, his simple-heartedness and sunny disposition, won and kept for him a host of friends. It is pleasant to contemplate this shy, awkward, pock-marked, improvident Irishman, winning his way to the hearts of London's greatest literary men. He impressed himself upon others not by presumption or by assertive wit, but by a humor which widened sympathy while it wakened laughter. His literary style, like his personality, was irresistible, because its charm was natural. He was in the estimation of his friends, as Dr. Johnson said, "a very great man"; and when he died, in 1774, at the early age of forty-five, the grief of Johnson, Burke, Reynolds, and the rest was very deep and sincere.

The student who takes up the reading of this author's works will soon find that he has entered upon what is not a task, but a delight. In both verse and prose Goldsmith is a most important figure in the transition from the later Classical school to the new Romantic of the nineteenth century. *The Traveller* (1764) for reflective poetry, *The*

Vicar of Wakefield (1766) for the story, and *She Stoops to Conquer* (1773) for the drama, are representative works which all should read. But the most popular of his writings is *The Deserted Village*. It is also the most painstaking and artistic of his poems, and therefore deserves especial attention.

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain;
Where health and plenty cheered the laboring swain,
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
And parting summer's lingering blooms delayed:
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please,
How often have I loitered o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endeared each scene!
How often have I paused on every charm,
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topped the neighboring hill,
The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and whispering lovers made!
How often have I blest the coming day,
When toil remitting lent its turn to play,
And all the village train, from labor free,
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree,
While many a pastime circled in the shade,
The young contending as the old surveyed;
And many a gambol frolicked o'er the ground,
And sleights of art and feats of strength went round.
And still, as each repeated pleasure tired,
Succeeding sports the mirthful band inspired;
The dancing pair that simply sought renown
By holding out to tire each other down;
The swain mistrustless of his smutted face,
While secret laughter tittered round the place;
The bashful virgin's side-long looks of love,
The matron's glance that would those looks reprove.

These were thy charms, sweet village! sports like these,
With sweet succession, taught even toil to please:
These round thy bowers their cheerful influence shed:
These were thy charms — but all these charms are fled.
Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn,
Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms withdrawn;
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,
And desolation saddens all thy green:
One only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain.
No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,
But, choked with sedges, works its weedy way;
Along thy glades, a solitary guest,
The hollow sounding bittern guards its nest;
Amidst thy desert walks the lapwing flies,
And tires their echoes with unvaried cries:
Sunk are thy bowers in shapeless ruin all,
And the long grass o'ertops the mouldering wall;
And, trembling, shrinking from the spoiler's hand,
Far, far away thy children leave the land.
Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay:
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade —
A breath can make them, as a breath has made —
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.
A time there was, ere England's griefs began,
When every rood of ground maintained its man:
For him light labor spread her wholesome store,
Just gave what life required, but gave no more;
His best companions, innocence and health,
And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.
But times are altered; trade's unfeeling train
Usurp the land, and dispossess the swain;
Along the lawn, where scattered hamlets rose,
Unwieldy wealth and cumbrous pomp repose,
And every want to opulence allied,
And every pang that folly pays to pride.

These gentle hours that plenty bade to bloom,
Those calm desires that asked but little room,
Those healthful sports that graced the peaceful scene,
Lived in each look, and brightened all the green, —
These, far departing, seek a kinder shore,
And rural mirth and manners are no more.
Sweet Auburn! parent of the blissful hour,
Thy glades forlorn confess the tyrant's power.
Here, as I take my solitary rounds
Amidst thy tangling walks and ruined grounds,
And, many a year elapsed, return to view
Where once the cottage stood, the hawthorn grew,
Remembrance wakes with all her busy train,
Swells at my breast, and turns the past to pain.
In all my wanderings round this world of care,
In all my griefs — and GOD has given my share —
I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down;
To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting by repose:
I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,
Amidst the swains to show my book-learned skill,
Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt, and all I saw;
And, as an hare whom hounds and horns pursue
Pants to the place from whence at first she flew,
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return — and die at home at last.
O blest retirement, friend to life's decline,
Retreats from care, that never must be mine!
How happy he who crowns, in shades like these,
A youth of labor with an age of ease;
Who quits a world where strong temptations try,
And, since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly!
For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
Explore the mine, or tempt the dangerous deep;
No surly porter stands in guilty state,
To spurn imploring famine from the gate;

But on he moves to meet his latter end,
Angels around befriending Virtue's friend;
Bends to the grave with unperceived decay,
While resignation gently slopes the way;
And, all his prospects brightening to the last,
His heaven commences ere the world be past.
Sweet was the sound, when oft at evening's close
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose.
There as I passed with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came softened from below:
The swain responsive as the milk-maid sung,
The sober herd that lowed to meet their young,
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
The playful children just let loose from school,
The watch-dog's voice that bayed the whispering wind,
And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind, —
These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
And filled each pause the nightingale had made.
But now the sounds of population fail,
No cheerful murmurs fluctuate in the gale,
No busy steps the grass-grown foot-way tread,
For all the bloomy flush of life is fled.
All but yon widowed, solitary thing,
That feebly bends beside the plashy spring;
She, wretched matron, forced in age, for bread,
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,
To pick her wintry faggot from the thorn,
To seek her nightly shed, and weep till morn;
She only left of all the harmless train,
The sad historian of the pensive plain.
Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden flower grows wild,
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.
A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a year:
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change his place:

Unpractised he to fawn, or seek for power
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour;
Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,
More skilled to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train;
He chid their wanderings but relieved their pain:
The long remembered beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
The ruined spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claimed kindred there, and had his claims allowed;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by his fire, and talked the night away,
Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,
Shouldered his crutch and showed how fields were won.
Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.
  Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And e'en his failings leaned to Virtue's side;
But in his duty prompt at every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all;
And, as a bird each fond endearment tries
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.
  Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain by turns dismayed,
The reverend champion stood. At his control
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last faltering accents whispered praise.
  At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorned the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,
And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray.
The service past, around the pious man,
With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran;

Even children followed with endearing wile,
And plucked his gown to share the good man's smile:
His ready smile a parent's warmth expressed;
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distressed:
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.
As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,
With blossomed furze unprofitably gay,
There, in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,
The village master taught his little school.
A man severe he was, and stern to view;
I knew him well, and every truant knew:
Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face;
Full well they laughed with counterfeited glee
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;
Full well the busy whisper, circling round,
Conveyed the dismal tidings when he frowned;
Yet he was kind, or, if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault.
The village all declared how much he knew:
'Twas certain he could write, and cipher too;
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
And even the story ran that he could gauge.
In arguing, too, the parson owned his skill,
For, even though vanquished, he could argue still;
While words of learned length and thundering sound
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around;
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew.

But past is all his fame. The very spot
Where many a time he triumphed is forgot.
Near yonder thorn, that lifts its head on high,
Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye,

Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts inspired,
Where grey-beard mirth and smiling toil retired,
Where village statesmen talked with looks profound,
And news much older than their ale went round.
Imagination fondly stoops to trace
The parlor splendors of that festive place:
The whitewashed wall, the nicely sanded floor,
The varnished clock that clicked behind the door;
The chest contrived a double debt to pay,
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;
The pictures placed for ornament and use,
The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose;
The hearth, except when winter chilled the day,
With aspen boughs and flowers and fennel gay;
While broken tea-cups, wisely kept for show,
Ranged o'er the chimney, glistened in a row.
  Vain transitory splendors! could not all
Reprieve the tottering mansion from its fall?
Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart
An hour's importance to the poor man's heart.
Thither no more the peasant shall repair
To sweet oblivion of his daily care;
No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,
No more the wood-man's ballad shall prevail;
No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,
Relax his ponderous strength, and lean to hear;
The host himself no longer shall be found
Careful to see the mantling bliss go round;
Nor the coy maid, half willing to be pressed,
Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.
  Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
These simple blessings of the lowly train;
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art;
Spontaneous joys, where Nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first born sway,
Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
Unenvied, unmolested, unconfined.

But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
With all the freaks of wanton wealth arrayed, —
In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain;
And, e'en while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart distrusting asks if this be joy.

Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey
The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay,
'Tis yours to judge, how wide the limits stand
Between a splendid and an happy land.
Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,
And shouting Folly hails them from her shore;
Hoards e'en beyond the miser's wish abound,
And rich men flock from all the world around.
Yet count our gains. This wealth is but a name
That leaves our useful products still the same.
Not so the loss. The man of wealth and pride
Takes up a space that many poor supplied, —
Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds:
The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth
Has robbed the neighboring fields of half their growth;
His seat, where solitary sports are seen,
Indignant spurns the cottage from the green:
Around the world each needful product flies,
For all the luxuries the world supplies;
While thus the land adorned for pleasure all
In barren splendor feebly waits the fall.

As some fair female, unadorned and plain,
Secure to please while youth confirms her reign,
Slights every borrowed charm that dress supplies,
Nor shares with art the triumph of her eyes;
But when those charms are past, for charms are frail,
When time advances, and when lovers fail,
She then shines forth, solicitous to bless,
In all the glaring impotence of dress:
Thus fares the land by luxury betrayed;
In nature's simplest charms at first arrayed,

But verging to decline, its splendors rise,
Its vistas strike, its palaces surprise;
While, scourged by famine from the smiling land,
The mournful peasant leads his humble band,
And while he sinks, without one arm to save,
The country blooms — a garden and a grave.
Where then, ah! where, shall poverty reside,
To 'scape the pressure of contiguous pride?
If to some common's fenceless limits strayed
He drives his flock to pick the scanty blade,
Those fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide,
And even the bare-worn common is denied.
If to the city sped — what waits him there?
To see profusion that he must not share;
To see ten thousand baneful arts combined
To pamper luxury, and thin mankind;
To see those joys the sons of pleasure know
Extorted from his fellow-creature's woe.
Here while the courtier glitters in brocade,
There the pale artist plies the sickly trade;
Here while the proud their long-drawn pomps display,
There the black gibbet glooms beside the way.
The dome where pleasure holds her midnight reign
Here, richly decked, admits the gorgeous train:
Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare.
Sure scenes like these no troubles e'er annoy!
Sure these denote one universal joy!
Are these thy serious thoughts? — Ah, turn thine eyes
Where the poor houseless shivering female lies.
She once, perhaps, in village plenty blest,
Has wept at tales of innocence distressed;
Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,
Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn:
Now lost to all, — her friends, her virtue fled, —
Near her betrayer's door she lays her head,
And, pinched with cold, and shrinking from the shower,
With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour

When idly first, ambitious of the town,
She left her wheel and robes of country brown.
Do thine, sweet Auburn, — thine, the loveliest train, —
Do thy fair tribes participate her pain?
Even now, perhaps, by cold and hunger led,
At proud men's doors they ask a little bread!
Ah, no! To distant climes, a dreary scene,
Where half the convex world intrudes between,
Through torrid tracts with fainting steps they go,
Where wild Altama murmurs to their woe.
Far different there from all that charmed before,
The various terrors of that horrid shore;
Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray,
And fiercely shed intolerable day;
Those matted woods, where birds forget to sing,
But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling;
Those poisonous fields with rank luxuriance crowned,
Where the dark scorpion gathers death around;
Where at each step the stranger fears to wake
The rattling terrors of the vengeful snake;
Where crouching tigers wait their hapless prey,
And savage men more murderous still than they;
While oft in whirls the mad tornado flies,
Mingling the ravaged landscape with the skies.
Far different these from every former scene,
The cooling brook, the grassy vested green,
The breezy covert of the warbling grove,
That only sheltered thefts of harmless love.
Good Heaven! what sorrows gloomed that parting day,
That called them from their native walks away;
When the poor exiles, every pleasure past,
Hung round the bowers, and fondly looked their last,
And took a long farewell, and wished in vain
For seats like these beyond the western main;
And shuddering still to face the distant deep,
Returned and wept, and still returned to weep.
The good old sire the first prepared to go
To new found worlds, and wept for others' woe;

But for himself, in conscious virtue brave,
He only wished for worlds beyond the grave.
His lovely daughter, lovelier in her tears,
The fond companion of his helpless years,
Silent went next, neglectful of her charms,
And left a lover's for a father's arms.
With louder plaints the mother spoke her woes,
And blessed the cot where every pleasure rose,
And kissed her thoughtless babes with many a tear,
And clasped them close, in sorrow doubly dear;
Whilst her fond husband strove to lend relief
In all the silent manliness of grief.
O luxury! thou cursed by Heaven's decree,
How ill exchanged are things like these for thee!
How do thy potions, with insidious joy,
Diffuse their pleasure only to destroy!
Kingdoms by thee, to sickly greatness grown,
Boast of a florid vigor not their own.
At every draught more large and large they grow,
A bloated mass of rank unwieldy woe;
Till sapped their strength, and every part unsound,
Down, down they sink, and spread a ruin round.
Even now the devastation is begun,
And half the business of destruction done;
Even now, methinks, as pondering here I stand,
I see the rural virtues leave the land.
Down where yon anchoring vessel spreads the sail,
That idly waiting flaps with every gale,
Downward they move, a melancholy band,
Pass from the shore, and darken all the strand.
Contented toil, and hospitable care,
And kind connubial tenderness, are there;
And piety with wishes placed above,
And steady loyalty, and faithful love.
And thou, sweet Poetry, thou loveliest maid,
Still first to fly where sensual joys invade;
Unfit in these degenerate times of shame
To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame;

Dear charming nymph, neglected and decried,
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride;
Thou source of all my bliss, and all my woe,
That found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so;
Thou guide by which the nobler arts excel,
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well!
Farewell, and O! where'er thy voice be tried,
On Torno's cliffs, or Pambamarca's side,
Whether where equinoctial fervors glow,
Or winter wraps the polar world in snow,
Still let thy voice, prevailing over time,
Redress the rigors of the inclement clime;
Aid slighted truth with thy persuasive strain;
Teach erring man to spurn the rage of gain;
Teach him, that states of native strength possessed,
Though very poor, may still be very blest;
That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,
As ocean sweeps the labored mole away;
While self-dependent power can time defy,
As rocks resist the billows and the sky.

WILLIAM BLAKE (1757–1827)

William Blake wrote reams of mystical and symbolical poetry and prose. Owing, however, to his intellectual eccentricity, his comparatively secluded way of living, and the restricted publication of his books — printed by himself from his own engravings of the text — his works were little known by his contemporaries. But his rarely beautiful and spontaneous lyrics, the finest in England since Herrick's, have exercised a marked influence upon some of the poets of the later nineteenth century. To the general reader he is known chiefly by his *Poetical Sketches* (1783), *Songs of Innocence* (1789), and *Songs of Experience* (1794). In these, according to Professor Saintsbury, there are pieces which for a "certain combination of extreme simplicity with unearthly music" few contemporaries or followers were to equal.

SONGS OF INNOCENCE

INTRODUCTION

Piping down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he laughing said to me:

"Pipe a song about a Lamb!"
So I piped with merry cheer.
"Piper, pipe that song again;"
So I piped: he wept to hear.

"Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;
Sing thy songs of happy cheer!"
So I sung the same again,
While he wept with joy to hear.

"Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book, that all may read."
So he vanished from my sight;
And I plucked a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,
And I stained the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

ON ANOTHER'S SORROW

Can I see another's woe,
And not be in sorrow too?
Can I see another's grief,
And not seek for kind relief?

Can I see a falling tear,
And not feel my sorrow's share?

Can a father see his child
Weep, nor be with sorrow filled?

Can a mother sit and hear
An infant groan, an infant fear?
No, no! never can it be!
Never, never can it be!

And can He who smiles on all
Hear the wren with sorrows small,
Hear the small bird's grief and care,
Hear the woes that infants bear —

And not sit beside the nest,
Pouring pity in their breast,
And not sit the cradle near,
Weeping tear on infant's tear?

And not sit both night and day,
Wiping all our tears away?
O no! never can it be!
Never, never can it be!

He doth give His joy to all;
He becomes an infant small;
He becomes a man of woe;
He doth feel the sorrow too.

Think not thou canst sigh a sigh,
And thy Maker is not by:
Think not thou canst weep a tear,
And thy Maker is not near.

Oh, He gives to us His joy,
That our grief He may destroy;
Till our grief is fled and gone
He doth sit by us and moan.

THE CHIMNEY SWEEPER

When my mother died I was very young,
And my father sold me while yet my tongue
Could scarcely cry " 'weep ! 'weep ! 'weep ! 'weep ! "
So your chimneys I sweep, and in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head,
That curled like a lamb's back, was shaved ; so I said,
" Hush, Tom ! never mind it, for when your head's bare
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair."

And so he was quiet, and that very night,
As Tom was a-sleeping, he had such a sight ! —
That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, and Jack,
Were all of them locked up in coffins of black.

And by came an Angel who had a bright key,
And he opened the coffins and set them all free ;
Then down a green plain, leaping, laughing, they run,
And wash in a river and shine in the sun.

Then naked and white, all their bags left behind,
They rise upon clouds and sport in the wind ;
And the Angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,
He'd have God for his father, and never want joy.

And so Tom awoke ; and we rose in the dark,
And got with our bags and our brushes to work.
Though the morning was cold, Tom was happy and warm ;
So if all do their duty they need not fear harm.

AUGURIES OF INNOCENCE

To see a world in a grain of sand,
And a heaven in a wild flower ;
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
And eternity in an hour.

ROBERT BURNS (1759–1796)

The greatest poet of Scotland, the most original of the eighteenth-century poets of Great Britain, one of the best song writers of the world, — these are epithets not too extravagant to apply to Robert Burns. Born to a most humble life, a poor country ploughboy, without the advantages of education or of training in his art, he has nevertheless succeeded beyond all but a few in touching the heart of mankind. He was born to be the poet of lyrical passion, to sing the joys and sorrows, the hopes and fears, the loves and yearnings and ambitions of the homely human nature which he knew and so well understood. Except in one or two poems his aim is not action or dramatic intensity; and he displays little of the reflective quality and sustained imagination that characterize the highest order of poets. He felt rather than thought; he sang rather than philosophized.

Tender and sympathetic toward all living things, he has a message for our hearts from the heart of Nature. Generous and impulsive, he carries us with him in his recital of experiences whether imaginary or real. And in Burns the experience is usually real. With his lively humor he makes village scènes and pleasures, and their simple, lowly heroes, live again for us. When once Burns had sung, no singer could be artificial and succeed. By the warmth of his lyrics he thawed "the eighteenth-century frost" of Pope and his followers. By his dialect poems he turned the broad, provincial Ayrshire into a national and literary tongue. Still, at the best, his was only a half life, with possibilities half realized. The early years were a struggle with harsh necessity; the later, a struggle with dissipation and despair. Had his will power been as strong as his passions were deep, and his life as pure as his ideals high, it is impossible to surmise how successful both in life and letters he might have been. For his nature was at bottom both sensitive and reverent; his religious feeling deep and sincere. Despite its blemishes and notwithstanding his own imperfections — perhaps, after all, because of the passion of them — his poetry stands out honest, manly, and inspiring.

1759–1786. — Burns was born in a small clay cottage on a little farm two miles south of the Scottish town of Ayr, and close to the old Alloway Kirk of his *Tam o' Shanter*. His father was an intelligent, God-fearing man, but very poor; and the lad's education was necessarily of the most fragmentary character. From his fourteenth to his twenty-fourth year, young Burns worked hard as the principal laborer on his father's farm. All this time, however, he was a great reader, devouring, among other things, the *Spectator*,

Shakespeare, Pope, and the ballads of Scotland. These Scottish ballads seem early to have aroused a spirit of artistic emulation, and we soon hear of the young poet, as he guides his plough, fitting words of his own to ancient Scottish tunes. When about twenty-three years of age he went to a neighboring town to learn the trade of flax-dressing; here were sown the seeds of the evil habits which did so much to ruin his later life. In 1784 his father died; and, with his brother, Robert rented a farm at Mossgiel, where many of his best poems were written, among others *The Cotter's Saturday Night*. But the farm proved a failure; and the poet, wearied with that kind of life, and harassed by the consequences of his youthful follies, laid plans for emigrating to the West Indies. To secure money for the expenses of this voyage, he published, in 1786, a small volume of *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*. The result was entirely unexpected. Scotland was taken by storm; and the poet was induced to pay a visit to Edinburgh, where he became the literary and social lion of the day.

1786–1796. — Burns spent a winter at Edinburgh, partly in the cultivated circles of that great literary centre, partly with rough and drunken companions at the taverns and social clubs of the city. With the proceeds of a second edition of his poems he took the lease of a farm at Ellisland in southern Scotland. Then he married Jean Armour, the most permanent of his many loves. This, the period in which *Tam o' Shanter* was written, was the happiest of his life; but it was a period of very brief duration. In 1789 he secured a position as exciseman, that is, inspector of liquors and other goods liable to an internal revenue tax. His habits of intemperance were now becoming constantly worse, and from the day, in 1791, when he finally abandoned his farm for a residence in the neighboring town of Dumfries, his downfall was rapid. It is true that during periods of remorse and temporary reform he still continued to write immortal songs; but his health had been shattered, and his spirits were broken. At last, in July, 1796, when only thirty-seven years old, the poet died.

The Cotter's Saturday Night and *Tam o' Shanter* are the most famous of Burns's longer poems. *The Twa Dogs* and *The Brigs of Ayr* are replete with humor and keen observation. The little poems, *To a Mountain Daisy* and *To a Mouse*, exquisitely express the poet's feeling for nature. But the best of his writings are unquestionably the songs, such as *Bonie Doon*, *Highland Mary*, *A Red, Red Rose*, *Scots Wha Hae wi' Wallace Bled*, *A Man's a Man for A' That*, and scores of others. It should be noted that, save a few stanzas of *The Cotter's Saturday Night*, all the poems mentioned above are in the Scottish

dialect. Indeed, when the poet abandons his native dialect for literary English, he is frequently neither better nor worse than dozens of minor poets of the eighteenth century. But the student who wishes to read Burns need not fear the dialect; for mere reading purposes, it is as easily mastered as it is charming in its effects.

AULD LANG SYNE

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And auld lang syne!

CHORUS

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne.

And surely ye'll be your pint-stowp!
And surely I'll be mine!
And we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne.

We twa hae run about the braes,
And pou'd the gowans fine;
But we've wander'd mony a weary foot
Sin' auld lang syne.

We twa hae paidl'd in the burn,
Frae morning sun till dine;
But seas between us braid hae roar'd
Sin' auld lang syne.

And there's a hand, my trusty fiere!
And gie's a hand o' thine!
And we'll tak a right gude-willy waught,
For auld lang syne.

OF A' THE AIRTS THE WIND CAN BLAW

Of a' the airts the wind can blaw
I dearly like the west,
For there the bonie lassie lives,
The lassie I lo'e best:
There's wild-woods grow and rivers row,
And mony a hill between;
But day and night my fancy's flight
Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
I see her sweet and fair:
I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
I hear her charm the air:
There's not a bonie flower that springs
By fountain, shaw, or green;
There's not a bonie bird that sings,
But minds me o' my Jean.

HIGHLAND MARY

Ye banks and braes and streams around
The castle o' Montgomery,
Green be your woods and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie!
There simmer first unfauld her robes,
And there the langest tarry;
For there I took the last fareweel,
O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloom'd the gay, green birk,
How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
As underneath their fragrant shade
I clasp'd her to my bosom!
The golden hours, on angel wings,
Flew o'er me and my dearie;

For dear to me as light and life,
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' mony a vow and lock'd embrace
Our parting was fu' tender;
And, pledging aft to meet again,
We tore oursels asunder;
But O! fell death's untimely frost,
That nipt my flower sae early!
Now green's the sod, and cauld's the clay,
That wraps my Highland Mary!

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips
I aft hae kiss'd sae fondly!
And clos'd for ay the sparkling glance,
That dwelt on me sae kindly!
And mouldering now in silent dust,
That heart that lo'ed me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary.

BONIE DOON

Ye flowery banks o' bonie Doon,
How can ye blume sae fair?
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae fu' o' care?

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonie bird,
That sings upon the bough;
Thou minds me o' the happy days,
When my fause luve was true.

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonie bird,
That sings beside thy mate;
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
And wist na o' my fate.

Aft hae I rov'd by bonie Doon
To see the wood-bine twine,
And ilka bird sang o' its luve,
And sae did I o' mine.

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose
Frae aff its thorny tree;
And my fause luver staw my rose
But left the thorn wi' me.

DUNCAN GRAY

Duncan Gray cam here to woo,
Ha, ha, the wooin o't!
On blythe Yule-night when we were fou,
Ha, ha, the wooin o't!
Maggie coost her head fu' high,
Look'd asklent and unco skeigh,
Gart poor Duncan stand abeigh;
Ha, ha, the wooin o't!

Duncan fleech'd, and Duncan pray'd;
Ha, ha, the wooin o't!
Meg was deaf as Ailsa Craig,
Ha, ha, the wooin o't!
Duncan sigh'd baith out and in,
Grat his een baith bleer't and blin',
Spak o' lowpin owre a linn;
Ha, ha, the wooin o't!

Time and chance are but a tide,
Ha, ha, the wooin o't!
Slighted love is sair to bide,
Ha, ha, the wooin o't!
"Shall I, like a fool," quoth he,
"For a haughty hizzie die?
She may gae to — France for me!"
Ha, ha, the wooin o't!

How it comes let doctors tell,
Ha, ha, the wooin o't!
Meg grew sick as he grew hale,
Ha, ha, the wooin o't!
Something in her bosom wrings,
For relief a sigh she brings;
And O! her een, they spak sic things!
Ha, ha, the wooin o't!

Duncan was a lad o' grace,
Ha, ha, the wooin o't!
Maggie's was a piteous case,
Ha, ha, the wooin o't!
Duncan couldna be her death,
Swelling pity smoor'd his wrath;
Now they're crouse and canty baith;
Ha, ha, the wooin o't!

SCOTS WHA HAE

Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led;
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to victory!

Now's the day, and now's the hour;
See the front o' battle lour;
See approach proud Edward's power —
Chains and slavery!

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
Let him turn and flee!

Wha for Scotland's king and law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Freeman stand, or Freeman fa',
Let him on wi' me!

By oppression's woes and pains!
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they *shall* be free!

Lay the proud usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow! —
Let us do or die!

A MAN'S A MAN FOR A' THAT

Is there, for honest poverty,
That hings his head, an' a' that?
The coward slave, we pass him by,
We dare be poor for a' that!
For a' that, an' a' that,
Our toils obscure, an' a' that;
The rank is but the guinea's stamp;
The man's the gowd for a' that.

What tho' on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hodden-gray, an' a' that;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A man's a man for a' that.
For a' that, an' a' that,
Their tinsel show, an' a' that;
The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor,
Is king o' men for a' that.

Ye see yon birkie, ca'd a lord,
Wha struts, an' stares, an' a' that;
Tho' hundreds worship at his word,
He's but a coof for a' that:
For a' that, an' a' that,
His riband, star, an' a' that,
The man o' independent mind,
He looks and laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, an' a' that;
But an honest man's aboon his might,
Guid faith he mauna fa' that!
For a' that, an' a' that,
Their dignities, an' a' that,
The pith o' sense, an' pride o' worth,
Are higher rank than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may,
As come it will for a' that,
That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,
May bear the gree, an' a' that.
For a' that, an' a' that,
It's coming yet, for a' that,
That man to man, the world o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that.

A RED, RED ROSE

My luve is like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June:
My luve is like the melodie
That's sweetly play'd in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonie lass,
So deep in luve am I;
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry:

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun;
I will luve thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only luve!
And fare thee weel awhile!
And I will come again, my luve,
Tho' 'twere ten thousand mile.

TO A MOUSE, ON TURNING HER UP IN HER NEST, WITH THE PLOUGH, NOVEMBER, 1785

Wee, sleekit, cow'rin, tim'rous beastie,
O, what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty
Wi' bickerin brattle!
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee
Wi' murd'rin pattle!

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,
An' fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whyles, but thou may thieve;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen-icker in a thrave
'S a sma' request:
I'll get a blessin wi' the lave,
An' never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
Its silly wa's the win's are strewin!
An' naething, now, to big a new ane,
O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuin,
Baith snell an' keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary winter comin fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell,
Till, crash! the cruel coulter past
Out thro' thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!
Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,
But house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble
An' cranreuch cauld!

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane
In proving foresight may be vain:
The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft a-gley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief and pain
For promis'd joy.

Still, thou art blest, compar'd wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But, och! I backward cast my e'e
On prospects drear!
An' forward, tho' I canna see,
I guess an' fear!

THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT

INSCRIBED TO ROBERT AIKEN, ESQ., OF AYR

"Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor." — GRAY.

My loved, my honored, much respected friend!
No mercenary bard his homage pays;
With honest pride, I scorn each selfish end,
My dearest meed, a friend's esteem and praise:
To you I sing, in simple Scottish lays,
The lowly train in life's sequestered scene;
The native feelings strong, the guileless ways;
What Aiken in a cottage would have been;
Ah! tho' his worth unknown, far happier there, I ween.

November chill blaws loud wi' angry sugh;
The short'ning winter-day is near a close;
The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh;
The black'ning trains o' craws to their repose:
The toil-worn Cotter frae his labor goes, —
This night his weekly moil is at an end,
Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his hoes,
Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend,
And weary, o'er the moor, his course does hameward bend.

At length his lonely cot appears in view,
Beneath the shelter of an agèd tree;
Th' expectant wee-things, toddlin, stacher thro'
To meet their Dad, wi' flichterin noise an' glee.
His wee bit ingle, blinkin bonily,
His clean hearth-stane, his thrifty wifie's smile,
The lisping infant prattling on his knee,
Does a' his weary carking cares beguile,
An' makes him quite forget his labor an' his toil.

Belyve, the elder bairns come drapping in,
At service out, amang the farmers roun';
Some ca' the pleugh, some herd, some tentie rin
A cannie errand to a neebor town:
Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman-grown,
In youthfu' bloom, — love sparkling in her e'e —
Comes hame, perhaps to shew a braw new gown,
Or déposite her sair-won penny-fee,
To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.

Wi' joy unfeigned brothers and sisters meet,
An' each for other's weelfare kindly spiers:
The social hours, swift-winged, unnoticed fleet;
Each tells the uncos that he sees or hears;
The parents, partial, eye their hopeful years;
Anticipation forward points the view.
The mother, wi' her needle an' her shears,

Gars auld claes look amaist as weel's the new;
The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

Their master's an' their mistress's command,
The younkers a' are warnèd to obey;
An' mind their labors wi' an eydent hand,
An' ne'er tho' out o' sight, to jauk or play;
"An' O! be sure to fear the Lord alway,
An' mind your duty, duly, morn an' night!
Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,
Implore His counsel and assisting might:
They never sought in vain that sought the Lord aright!"

But, hark! a rap comes gently to the door;
Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,
Tells how a neebor lad cam o'er the moor,
To do some errands, an' convoy her hame.
The wily mother sees the conscious flame
Sparkle in Jenny's e'e, and flush her cheek;
Wi' heart-struck, anxious care, inquires his name,
While Jenny hafflins is afraid to speak;
Weel pleased the mother hears it's nae wild, worthless rake.

Wi' kindly welcome, Jenny brings him ben;
A strappan youth, he takes the mother's eye;
Blythe Jenny sees the visit's no ill-ta'en;
The father cracks of horses, pleughs, and kye.
The youngster's artless heart o'erflows wi' joy,
But, blate an' laithfu', scarce can weel behave;
The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy
What makes the youth sae bashfu' an' sae grave,
Weel-pleased to think her bairn's respected like the lave.

O, happy love! where love like this is found!
O, heart-felt raptures! bliss beyond compare!
I've pacèd much this weary, mortal round,
And sage experience bids me this declare: —
"If Heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,

One cordial in this melancholy vale,
'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair
In other's arms breathe out the tender tale,
Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the ev'ning gale."

Is there, in human form, that bears a heart,
A wretch! a villain! lost to love and truth!
That can, with studied, sly, ensnaring art,
Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth?
Curse on his perjured arts! dissembling smooth!
Are honour, virtue, conscience, all exiled?
Is there no pity, no relenting ruth,
Points to the parents fondling o'er their child?
Then paints the ruined maid, and their distraction wild?

But now the supper crowns their simple board,
The halesome parritch, chief o' Scotia's food;
The soupe their only hawkie does afford,
That 'yont the hallan snugly chows her cood:
The dame brings forth in complimental mood,
To grace the lad, her weel-hained kebbuck, fell;
An' aft he's prest, an' aft he ca's it guid:
The frugal wifie, garrulous, will tell
How 'twas a towmond auld, sin' lint was i' the bell.

The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
They, round the ingle, form a circle wide;
The sire turns o'er, wi' patriarchal grace,
The big ha'-Bible, ance his father's pride:
His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets wearing thin and bare;
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
He wales a portion with judicious care;
And "Let us worship God!" he says, with solemn air.

They chant their artless notes in simple guise;
They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim:

Perhaps " Dundee's " wild-warbling measures rise,
Or plaintive " Martyrs," worthy of the name;
Or noble " Elgin " beets the heaven-ward flame,
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays:
Compared with these, Italian trills are tame;
The tickled ears no heart-felt raptures raise;
Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise.

The priest-like father reads the sacred page,
How Abram was the friend of God on high;
Or Moses bade eternal warfare wage
With Amalek's ungracious progeny;
Or how the royal bard did groaning lie
Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire;
Or Job's pathetic plaint, and wailing cry;
Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire;
Or other holy seers that tune the sacred lyre.

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme:
How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed;
How He, who bore in Heaven the second name,
Had not on earth whereon to lay His head;
How His first followers and servants sped;
The precepts sage they wrote to many a land;
How he, who lone in Patmos banishèd,
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand,
And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounced by Heaven's command.

Then kneeling down, to Heaven's Eternal King,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays:
Hope " springs exulting on triumphant wing,"
That thus they all shall meet in future days;
There, ever bask in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear,
Together hymning their Creator's praise,
In such society, yet still more dear;
While circling Time moves round in an eternal sphere.

Compared with this, how poor Religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method and of art,
When men display to congregations wide
Devotion's ev'ry grace, except the heart!
The Power, incensed, the pageant will desert,
The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole;
But haply, in some cottage far apart,
May hear, well pleased, the language of the soul;
And in His Book of Life the inmates poor enroll.

Then homeward all take off their sev'ral way;
The youngling cottagers retire to rest:
The parent-pair their secret homage pay,
And proffer up to Heaven the warm request,
That He, who stills the raven's clam'rous nest,
And decks the lily fair in flow'ry pride,
Would, in the way His wisdom sees the best,
For them and for their little ones provide;
But chiefly, in their hearts with grace divine preside.

From scenes like these, old Scotia's grandeur springs,
That makes her loved at home, revered abroad:
Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,
"An honest man's the noblest work of God;"
And certes, in fair virtue's heavenly road,
The cottage leaves the palace far behind;
What is a lordling's pomp? a cumbrous load,
Disguising oft the wretch of human kind,
Studied in arts of hell, in wickedness refined!

O Scotia! my dear, my native soil!
For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is sent!
Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content!
And, O! may Heaven their simple lives prevent
From luxury's contagion, weak and vile!
Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,
A virtuous populace may rise the while,
And stand a wall of fire around their much-loved isle.

O Thou! who poured the patriotic tide,
That streamed thro' Wallace's undaunted heart;
Who dared to nobly stem tyrannic pride,
Or nobly die, the second glorious part,
(The patriot's God, peculiarly Thou art,
His friend, inspirer, guardian, and reward!)
Oh, never, never, Scotia's realm desert,
But still the patriot and the patriot-bard
In bright succession raise, her ornament and guard!

CHAPTER VII

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

1. THE NEW ROMANTIC POETRY

THE new movement, though it had gained increasing force during the eighteenth century, was, to some extent, unconscious of its own aims, or, rather, unconscious of any conflict between itself and the older school. Up to the last decade of the century, poets like Cowper and Crabbe failed to realize that the spirit of their verse had broken entirely with the spirit of the verse of the earlier conventionalists. But with the publication of the *Lyrical Ballads*, in 1798, the new movement at last came to an understanding, a realization, of its significance and aim; and the triumph of Romantic poetry was complete. In that little book WORDSWORTH and COLERIDGE presented by the example of their poems a protest against the methodical art of Pope and his tribe. They raised a new standard for themselves and for those who were to follow.

It must not be supposed that the Romantic revolution was accomplished in a day. Not only had it been preparing for nearly a hundred years: even when it arrived, its effects were so gradual as to be recognized at first by few. Other forms than the heroic couplet were more and more frequently adopted; diction became simpler, feeling more spontaneous, images more natural. A new and larger range of poetic subjects was eagerly sought and found. An indifference arose to canons of criticism hitherto held sacred. In the Classical school authority had reigned; now individuality became the watchword. Whatever men felt they wrote, and they wrote to please themselves and their readers. As a consequence, instead of the one traditional, universally approved style, artificial, because the conditions that produced it and the spirit that moved it were dead, as many styles arose as there were authors. And as a result there was now ushered in an activity of poetic creation second only to that of the Elizabethan age.

We have said that the *Lyrical Ballads* of Coleridge and Wordsworth marked the culmination of this Romantic movement, but that the far-reaching effects of the change were not realized at once. On

the appearance of Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, however, in 1805, the charms of the new kind of poetry became apparent to everybody. Of course it is true that the fame of SIR WALTER SCOTT (1771–1832) as a poet is overshadowed by the success of his inimitable prose. Yet, historically, too much cannot be made of the fact that the extreme popularity of his metrical romances did more to turn — and speedily turn — the public taste in favor of the new poetry than any of the far more artistic verse of Wordsworth or Coleridge, Shelley or Keats. As a matter of fact, some of Scott's poetry reaches a very high level, according to the canons of its kind; and if his work is uneven in its excellence and some of it rather commonplace, the same is no less true of Coleridge's and of Wordsworth's. The important thing for us to remember just here is that these three — Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Scott — at the beginning of the nineteenth century finally established a kind of poetry which in one form or another has since their time held sway.

Scott was not a poet of the highest order, creative and interpretative in one. He described a vivid scene, told a good tale, and so stirred the fancy and the heart. He never presents the spectacle of his own emotion; he rarely rises in his verse, though often in his novels, to the heights of ideal creation. He reproduces for us the picture of a whole-souled muscular Christianity. He is a representative poet of a very high order. He should certainly be included in a volume of this kind; that *The Lady of the Lake* or the *Lay* does not appear here is due entirely to lack of space.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770–1850)

It is doubtless true that no other great English poet is so unever in the quality of his productions as Wordsworth. Of the many hundreds of pages which he has written, perhaps scarcely more than a hundred can be regarded as poetry of the highest type. Yet that hundred is enough to insure his permanent esteem. From his earliest appearance critics have diverged widely in their judgment of his rank; but they are nowadays coming more and more to agree that he deserves to be placed, not indeed with Shakespeare and Milton, but with those who are either great creators or great seers, yet not both at once. He was an interpreter of life, as Chaucer and Spenser were creators of its living semblance. The marked inequality of his work was due very largely to his attempts to carry out his own famous "Theory of Poetry" as published in the second edition of the *Lyrical*

Ballads, 1800. Two of his dogmas were: that poetic material may fitly be drawn from themes connected with the common life of the poor and lowly; and that the language of poetry, that is to say, its words and its phrasing, should be selected from the language actually used by men. The first of these theories, although at the opposite pole from the teaching of Pope and other eighteenth-century poets of manners, was really not new, in view of the fact that Gray and Goldsmith, and particularly Crabbe and Burns, had already turned for their subjects to the everyday life of the common people. But the second thesis was new, and was the rock on which both the theory and the practice of Wordsworth were nearly wrecked. His critics thought that he desired to limit poetry to the mean and vulgar speech of ignorant people, and they consequently derided his doctrine. But this was not what he had intended to teach. He was leading a revolt against the artificial and pompous diction of the Classical school; he was attempting to show that a "proper selection" from the language of common life would admit of such elevation of style and such figurative expression as naturally attend any passionate utterance, and still would by no means displease or disgust the reader by its familiarity. The theory is right as a protest against unnatural or inflated diction; it is wrong so far as it tries to limit poetry to a diction of any restricted kind. And when Wordsworth attempts to exemplify his doctrine he more than once sinks into a style which, though versified, is both prosaic and inane. He is, on the other hand, at his best when his poems show the widest possible departure from both of the theories mentioned above.

Wordsworth was particularly the poet of reflection and philosophic thought. He had no humor or dramatic power, and little passion or narrative skill. Yet his spiritual earnestness and sincerity are such that we are constantly reminded in his poems of his own definition of poetry, "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling." At his best he shows a union of the deepest feeling and the profoundest thought. Unlike Milton and Gray and Tennyson and Arnold, he was not primarily a scholar of books. The woods, the fields, and his rustic neighbors were his best library. His love for nature was probably truer and more tender than that of any other English poet, before or since. His love was almost personal; he conceived nature as a living spirit. In his musings on the harmony between this spirit and the mind of man, he was led from his sympathy with the former to a tender fellow-feeling for the latter. Added to his wonderful insight into natural life was a love of liberty and a trust in God which make his best works

seem hardly less than inspired. During his early and best years the critics attacked him with a fierceness which no other great poet, save perhaps Keats, has ever aroused. But the poet's confidence in himself and in his own ultimate success was unwavering. His aim was to lead men back from the empty conventionalities of the former age to a simple, instinctive conception of existence in close touch with nature and with nature's God. As a teacher of this kind his influence was great and his greatness unquestionable. The eighty years of his life were singularly uneventful and may be indicated in a very few words.

1770–1798. — Wordsworth was born at Cockermouth, in Cumberland, April, 1770. His early education was received in Lancashire. He was graduated from Cambridge at the age of twenty-one without having distinguished himself in any way. On leaving college he spent a short time in France, where he was much tempted to participate in the French Revolution. He finally settled down with his sister Dorothy in Somersetshire, and there came under the influence and inspiration of his friend Coleridge. This intimacy resulted, in 1798, in the publication of the *Lyrical Ballads*, mainly the work of Wordsworth, yet containing Coleridge's immortal contribution, *The Ancient Mariner*.

1798–1850. — The winter after the appearance of the *Lyrical Ballads*, Wordsworth and his sister, in company with Coleridge, made a visit to Germany. Returning after a few months, the Wordsworths went back to their beloved northern country, settling first at Grasmere and then at Rydal Mount, in the lake region of Westmoreland. The *Lyrical Ballads* were republished in 1800 and again in 1802. This latter year was also the date of the poet's marriage to Mary Hutchinson, a cousin. In this quiet spot, with wife and sister, and surrounded by Coleridge, Southey, De Quincey, Dr. Arnold, and other friends, he spent in "plain living and high thinking" the quiet remainder of his life. His most important poems were written during the earlier part of this period. The *Ode to Duty* appeared in 1805; *The Prelude* was completed the same year; the *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality*, one year later. *Laodamia* and *The Excursion* were produced in 1814. Other volumes followed at intervals, though little actual writing was done after the poet's sixty-fifth year. On the death of Southey, in 1843, Wordsworth was made Poet Laureate. Before this time his works had succeeded in winning the appreciation of which their author was always calmly confident. His life came to an end in April, 1850, when he was just eighty years old.

The poems which are given below are, perhaps, Wordsworth's finest. They are, as the student will readily perceive, very far from conforming to any narrow theory of poetry. The *Tintern Abbey* lines formed a part of the *Lyrical Ballads;* the great *Ode* has already been mentioned. In justice to his complete poetic career, some, also, of the poems should be read that were written in accordance with his earlier creed. Among the best and sweetest of these are *Poor Susan, Expostulation and Reply, The Tables Turned, Michael,* and the poems on *Lucy.* Few more beautiful lyrics have been written than *The Solitary Reaper, I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud,* and *She Was a Phantom of Delight.* His longer poems, such as *The Excursion* and *The Prelude,* contain many passages of rare power and beauty, though others are tedious. As a writer of sonnets, Wordsworth's rank is very high. Saintsbury says of these that, with the exception of the *Tintern Abbey* and the *Ode on Immortality,* they contain almost his best work, and that the finest of them are characterized by a "stately magnificence" surpassed by no other poet — not even Milton.

LINES

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN ABBEY, ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE WYE DURING A TOUR, JULY 13, 1798

Five years have past; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a soft inland murmur. — Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
That on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,
Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see
These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild; these pastoral farms,

Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
With some uncertain notice, as might seem
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
Or of some hermit's cave, where by his fire
The hermit sits alone.
These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration: — feelings too
Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered, acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime; that blessèd mood,
In which the burden of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened: — that serene and blessèd mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on, —
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul;
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.
If this
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft —
In darkness and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir

Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart —
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye! Thou wanderer thro' the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee!

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again:
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first
I came among these hills; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led: more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads, than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For Nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all. — I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colors and their forms, were then to me
An appetite; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye. — That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn, nor murmur; other gifts
Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompense. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour

Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty world
Of eye, and ear, — both what they half create,
And what perceive; well pleased to recognize
In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.
Nor perchance,
If I were not thus taught, should I the more
Suffer my genial spirits to decay:
For thou art with me here upon the banks
Of this fair river; thou, my dearest Friend,
My dear, dear Friend; and in thy voice I catch
The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I make,
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy: for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress

With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;
And let the misty mountain-winds be free
To blow against thee: and, in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh! then,
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
And these my exhortations! Nor, perchance —
If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
Of past existence — wilt thou then forget
That on the banks of this delightful stream
We stood together; and that I, so long
A worshipper of Nature, hither came
Unwearied in that service: rather say
With warmer love — oh! with far deeper zeal
Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,
That after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake!

ODE

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

I

There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore; —
Turn whereso'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

II

The Rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the Rose,
The Moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare,
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;
The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath passed away a glory from the earth.

III

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief;
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong:
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;
I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,

And all the earth is gay;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every Beast keep holiday; —
Thou Child of Joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
Shepherd-boy!

IV

Ye blessèd Creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
My heart is at your festival,
My head hath its coronal,
The fulness of your bliss, I feel — I feel it all.
Oh evil day! if I were sullen
While Earth herself is adorning,
This sweet May-morning,
And the Children are culling
On every side,
In a thousand valleys far and wide,
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,
And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm: —
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
— But there's a Tree, of many, one,
A single Field which I have looked upon,
Both of them speak of something that is gone;
The Pansy at my feet
Doth the same tale repeat:
Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

V

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,

Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

VI

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
And, even with something of a Mother's mind,
And no unworthy aim,
The homely Nurse doth all she can
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

VII

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
A six years' Darling of a pigmy size!
See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his Mother's kisses,
With light upon him from his Father's eyes!
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,

Shaped by himself with newly-learnèd art;
A wedding or a festival,
A mourning or a funeral;
And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song:
Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
But it will not be long
Ere this be thrown aside,
And with new joy and pride
The little Actor cons another part;
Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"
With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
That Life brings with her in her equipage;
As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation.

VIII

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy Soul's immensity;
Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted forever by the eternal mind, —
Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
On whom those truths do rest,
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
Thou, over whom thy Immortality
Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,
A Presence which is not to be put by;
Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,

And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

IX

O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!
The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest —
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast: —
Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a Creature
Moving about in worlds not realised,
High instincts before which our mortal Nature
Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised:
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavor,
Nor Man nor Boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence in a season of calm weather
Though inland far we be,

Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the Children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

X

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
And let the young Lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound!
We in thought will join your throng,
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May!
What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now for ever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind;
In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering;
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

XI

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
Forebode not any severing of our loves!
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
I only have relinquished one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway.
I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they;
The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
Is lovely yet;

The Clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober coloring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

MY HEART LEAPS UP WHEN I BEHOLD

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky;
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old, —
Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

THE SOLITARY REAPER

Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:

A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings? —
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago:
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending; —
I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company:
I gazed — and gazed — but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN

At the corner of Wood Street, when daylight appears,
Hangs a thrush that sings loud, it has sung for three years
Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and has heard
In the silence of morning the song of the bird.

'Tis a note of enchantment; what ails her? She sees
A mountain ascending, a vision of trees;
Bright volumes of vapor through Lothbury glide,
And a river flows on through the vale of Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of the dale
Down which she so often has tripped with her pail;
And a single small cottage, a nest like a dove's,
The one only dwelling on earth that she loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven: but they fade,
The mist and the river, the hill and the shade;
The stream will not flow, and the hill will not rise,
And the colors have all passed away from her eyes!

SONNETS

LONDON, 1802 [TO MILTON]

Milton! thou should'st be living at this hour:
England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart:
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE, SEPTEMBER 3, 1802

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendor, valley, rock or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

IT IS A BEAUTEOUS EVENING, CALM AND FREE

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free;
The holy time is quiet as a Nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the sea.
Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder — everlastingly.
Dear Child! dear Girl! that walkest with me here,
If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less divine.
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year;
And worshipp'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.

THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US

The world is too much with us: late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
The Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not. — Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1772–1834)

Of all the poets who helped to usher in the Romantic movement, none was more original and brilliant than Coleridge. Possessed of a magnetic presence, a penetrating mind, a profound spiritual insight, and a wonderful influence over most of those with whom he came into contact, he had a native genius which ought to have placed him among the first of English authors. But, as Carlyle well expresses it, "To the man himself Nature had given, in high measure, the seeds of a noble endowment; and to unfold it had been forbidden him." For of all figures in our English pantheon of poets, none has been so weak of will, so destitute of executive force, so incapable of sustained effort, as this great dreamer. The early part of his life was filled with vague plans for social revolution; the last with a constant struggle against a craving for opium.

His work was fragmentary to a singular degree. Much of his poetry is unworthy of his capabilities. As a matter of fact, nine-tenths of what he did write has very properly been forgotten. But the part that *is* good, most of it written during a single twelvemonth when the poet was twenty-five years old, is marvellous, ranking with the best in English poetry. The imagery, the metre, the felicity of phrase, the novelty, the suggestiveness, the splendid creative inspiration, are of the highest, the inevitable order. But Coleridge was not gifted with poetic faculties alone. Critic, philosopher, theologian, journalist, lecturer, sparkling conversationist — he was all these, but all marred by the fatal flaw. Carry into action his splendid theories, or bring to a completion his brilliant designs, he could not. Yet, in spite of his frailties, he must be remembered as one of the most effective agents in revolutionizing English literary taste and in changing the current of English critical and philosophical thought. He had the gift of firing others to do what he could not do himself. Wordsworth, Southey, Lamb, Hazlitt, Scott, — all have acknowledged their great debt to the inspiration received from Coleridge.

1772–1804. — Coleridge was born at the village of Ottery St. Mary in Devonshire, October, 1772. His father, a clergyman and schoolmaster, died when the boy was only eight years old. Two years later he entered Christ's Hospital, a free school in London, where he was a schoolmate of that most delightful of essayists, CHARLES LAMB. At the age of nineteen he was enrolled at Jesus College, Cambridge, but left three years later without taking a degree. About this time he met the poet SOUTHEY, then a student at Oxford, and the two young

men formed wild schemes of a socialist colony in America, — an undertaking which was subsequently given up for lack of funds. In 1795 Coleridge and Southey married sisters, and the former at length settled down in Somersetshire, where he became intimate with Wordsworth and united with him in writing the *Lyrical Ballads*. To this year, 1797–1798, belong *The Ancient Mariner* and the first part of *Christabel;* also *Kubla Khan*, a short and very beautiful fragment, composed (its author asserts) in a dream. Though he had written some verse before he met Wordsworth, this was the high-water mark of Coleridge's poetry. The next year, with Wordsworth and his sister, Coleridge went to Germany, where he learned the language, became interested in German philosophy, and began to translate Schiller's *Wallenstein*. In 1801, at the age of twenty-eight, he made his home in the Lake district near Wordsworth and Southey. Here, just as life was opening her richest possibilities, he unfortunately took for an attack of rheumatism a quack medicine containing opium. The opium habit was henceforward to be his curse.

1804–1834. — Abandoning his family to the care of Southey, Coleridge spent the next dozen years in roaming hither and thither, in England or on the continent, writing, lecturing, dreaming, fighting his terrible habit. In these years his writing was mostly of the critical kind. In 1816, at the age of forty-four, he placed himself in the family of a London physician who undertook to help him overcome his appetite for opium. That year proved to be a second period of activity: it witnessed the production of the *Biographia Literaria*, his most notable prose work. The rest of his life was spent at the home of this good Mr. Gillman. Though unproductive of much published work, this was nevertheless a season of great influence and inspiration for the many " young, inquiring men," who were wont to gather around the oracle to listen to his wonderful and prophetic utterances concerning problems of philosophy and theology. Coleridge died in July, 1834.

His best poems are undoubtedly those which were written during his early manhood, while he was enjoying the companionship of Wordsworth. *Kubla Khan* and *Christabel*, though in certain passages of an almost unearthly beauty, are after all only fragments. But the ballad of *Love*, the *Hymn before Sunrise*, and the ode on *France* are both complete and highly poetical. His masterpiece, *The Ancient Mariner*, in its combination of mystery and sublimity, of marvellous descriptive power and half-hidden spiritual truth, stands undoubtedly first of the consciously artistic ballads of English literature.

THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER

IN SEVEN PARTS

Argument

How a ship having passed the Line was driven by storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell; and in what manner the Ancyent Marinere came back to his own Country.

PART I

An ancient Mariner meeteth three Gallants bidden to a wedding-feast and detaineth one.

It is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three.
"By thy long gray beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

"The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
May'st hear the merry din."

He holds him with his skinny hand,
"There was a ship," quoth he.
"Hold off! unhand me, gray-beard loon!"
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

The Wedding-Guest is spellbound by the eye of the old seafaring man, and constrained to hear his tale.

He holds him with his glittering eye —
The Wedding-Guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child:
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:
He cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

" The ship was cheered, the harbor cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top.

" The sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he!
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

The Mariner tells how the ship sailed southward with a good wind and fair weather, till it reached the line.

" Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon — "
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest heareth the bridal music; but the Mariner continueth his tale.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

" And now the Storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong:
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

The ship driven by a storm toward the south pole.

" With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

" And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold:
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

The land of ice, and of fearful sounds where no living thing was to be seen

" And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen:
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken —
The ice was all between.

" The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around:
It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
Like noises in a swound!

Till a great seabird, called the Albatross, came through the snow-fog, and was received with great joy and hospitality.

" At length did cross an Albatross,
Thorough the fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

" It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steered us through!

And lo! the Albatross proveth a bird of good omen, and followeth the ship as it returned northward through fog and floating ice.

" And a good south wind sprung up behind;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo!

" In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perched for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmered the white moon-shine."

The ancient Mariner inhospitably killeth the pious bird of good omen.

" God save thee, ancient Mariner!
From the fiends, that plague thee thus! —
Why look'st thou so?" — " With my cross-bow
I shot the Albatross.

Part II

" The Sun now rose upon the right;
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

" And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariners' hollo!

His shipmates cry out against the ancient Mariner, for killing the bird of good luck.

" And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe:
For all averred, I had killed the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
' Ah wretch!' said they, 'the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow!'

But when the fog cleared off, they justify the same, and thus make themselves accomplices in the crime.

" Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious Sun uprist:
Then all averred, I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist.
' 'Twas right,' said they, ' such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.'

The fair breeze continues; the ship enters the Pacific Ocean, and sails northward, even till it reaches the line.

" The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

The ship hath been suddenly becalmed.

" Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

" All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,

Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

" Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

And the Albatross begins to be avenged.

" Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere
Nor any drop to drink.

" The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

A spirit had followed them; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed souls nor angels; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more. The shipmates, in their sore distress would fain throw the whole guilt on the ancient

" About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white.

" And some in dreams assurèd were
Of the Spirit that plagued us so;
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

" And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was withered at the root;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

" Ah! well-a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

Part III

" There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye,
When, looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

Mariner: in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck.

The ancient Mariner beholdeth a sign in the element afar off.

" At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

" A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And still it neared and neared:
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged and tacked and veered.

" With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all dumb we stood!
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
And cried, ' A sail! a sail! '

At its nearer approach, it seemeth him to be a ship; and at a dear ransom he freeth his speech from the bonds of thirst.

" With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard me call:
Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

A flash of joy.

" ' See! see! ' (I cried) ' she tacks no more!
Hither to work us weal;
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel! '

And horror follows; for can it be a ship that comes onward without wind or tide?

" The western wave was all a-flame,
The day was well-nigh done!

Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright Sun;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the Sun.

It seemeth him but the skeleton of a ship.

" And straight the Sun was flecked with bars,
(Heaven's Mother send us grace!)
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
With broad and burning face.

"'Alas!' (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
'How fast she nears and nears!
Are those her sails that glance in the sun,
Like restless gossameres?

And its ribs are seen as bars on the face of the setting Sun. The Spectre-Woman and her death-mate, and no other on board the skeleton ship. Like vessel, like crew!

"'Are those her ribs through which the sun
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that woman all her crew?
Is that a Death? and are there two?
Is Death that woman's mate?'

" Her lips were red, her looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold:
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Nightmare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

Death and Life-in-Death have diced for the ship's crew, and she (the latter) winneth the ancient Mariner.

" The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice;
'The game is done! I've won! I've won!'
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

No twilight within the courts of the Sun.

" The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out;
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

At the rising of the Moon,

" We listened and looked sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,

My life-blood seemed to sip!
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed white,
From the sails the dew did drip —
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The hornèd Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

one after another,

" One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

his shipmates drop down dead.

" Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

But Life-in-Death begins her work on the ancient Mariner.

" The souls did from their bodies fly, —
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul, it passed me by,
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!"

PART IV

The Wedding-Guest feareth that a spirit is talking to him; but the ancient Mariner assureth him of his bodily life, and proceedeth to relate his horrible penance.

" I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
I fear thy skinny hand!
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribbed sea-sand.

" I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand, so brown." —
" Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!
This body dropt not down.

" Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

He despiseth the creatures of the calm,

" The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

and envieth that they should live, and so many lie dead.

" I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

" I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

" I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky,
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

But the curse liveth for him in the eye of the dead men.

" The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they:
The look with which they looked on me
Had never passed away.

In his loneliness and fixedness he yearneth towards the journeying Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country and their own

" An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh! more horrible than that
Is a curse in a dead man's eye!
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

" The moving Moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide:
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside —

" Her beams bemocked the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmèd water burnt alway
A still and awful red.

natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

" Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes:
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

By the light of the Moon he beholdeth God's creatures of the great calm.

" Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire:
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

" O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware:
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

Their beauty and their happiness.

He blesseth them in his heart.

" The selfsame moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

The spell begins to break.

Part V

" Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from heaven,
That slid into my soul.

By grace of the holy Mother, the ancient Mariner is refreshed with rain.

" The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew;
And when I awoke, it rained.

" My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

" I moved, and could not feel my limbs:
I was so light — almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessèd ghost.

He heareth sounds and seeth strange sights and commotions in the sky and the element.

" And soon I heard a roaring wind:
It did not come anear;
But with its sound it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere.

" The upper air burst into life!
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
To and fro they were hurried about!
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.

" And the coming wind did roar more loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge;
And the rain poured down from one black cloud;
The Moon was at its edge.

" The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The Moon was at its side:
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

The bodies of the ship's crew are inspirited,

" The loud wind never reached the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on!

Beneath the lightning and the Moon
The dead men gave a groan.

and the ship moves on;

" They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

" The helmsman steered, the ship moved on;
Yet never a breeze up blew;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools —
We were a ghastly crew.

" The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee:
The body and I pulled at one rope
But he said nought to me. — "

" I fear thee, ancient Mariner! "
" Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest!
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest:

but not by the souls of the men, nor by dæmons of earth or middle air, but by a blessed troop of angelic spirits, sent down by the invocation of the guardian saint.

" For when it dawned — they dropped their arms,
And clustered round the mast;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
And from their bodies passed.

" Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

" Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the sky-lark sing;

Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

"And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the heavens be mute.

"It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

"Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe:
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

The lonesome Spirit from the south pole carries on the ship as far as the line, in obedience to the angelic troop, but still requireth vengeance.

"Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid; and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

"The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean;
But in a minute she 'gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion —
Backwards and forwards half her length,
With a short uneasy motion.

"Then, like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound:
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swound.

" How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard, and in my soul discerned,
Two voices in the air.

The Polar Spirit's fellow-dæmons, the invisible inhabitants of the element, take part in his wrong; and two of them relate, one to the other, that penance long and heavy for the ancient Mariner hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit, who returneth southward.

" ' Is it he? ' quoth one, ' Is this the man?
By Him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless Albatross.

" ' The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.'

" The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:
Quoth he, ' The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do.'

Part VI

First Voice

" ' But tell me, tell me! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing —
What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the ocean doing? '

Second Voice

" ' Still as a slave before his lord,
The ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast —

" ' If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see! how graciously
She looketh down on him.'

First Voice

The Mariner hath been cast into a trance; for the angelic power causeth the vessel to drive northward faster than human life could endure.

" ' But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without or wave or wind? '

Second Voice

' The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

" ' Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated:
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated.'

The supernatural motion is retarded; the Mariner awakes, and his penance begins anew.

" I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night, the Moon was high;
The dead men stood together.

" All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

" The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

The curse is finally expiated.

" And now this spell was snapt: once more
I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen —

" Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows, a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

" But soon there breathed a wind on me
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

" It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring —
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

" Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sailed softly too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze —
On me alone it blew.

" Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed
The lighthouse top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

And the ancient Mariner beholdeth his native country.

" We drifted o'er the harbor-bar,
And I with sobs did pray —
' O let me be awake, my God!
Or let me sleep alway.'

" The harbor-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the Moon.

" The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
That stands above the rock:

The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

" And the bay was white with silent light,
Till, rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colors came.

The angelic spirits leave the dead bodies,

" A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were:
I turned my eyes upon the deck —
Oh Christ! what saw I there!

and appear in their own forms of light.

" Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood!
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

" This seraph-band, each waved his hand;
It was a heavenly sight!
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light;

" This seraph-band, each waved his hand:
No voice did they impart —
No voice; but oh! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

" But soon I heard the dash of oars;
I heard the Pilot's cheer;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

" The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast:
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

" I saw a third — I heard his voice:
It is the Hermit good!
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.

PART VII

The Hermit of the wood

" This Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with marineres
That come from a far countree.

" He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve —
He hath a cushion plump:
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

" The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk,
' Why, this is strange, I trow!
Where are those lights so many and fair,
That signal made but now? '

approacheth the ship with wonder.

" ' Strange, by my faith! ' the Hermit said —
' And they answered not our cheer!
The planks look warped! and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere!
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

" ' Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

" ' Dear Lord ! it hath a fiendish look — '
(The Pilot made reply)
' I am a-feared ' — ' Push on, push on ! '
Said the Hermit cheerily.

" The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirred;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard.

The ship suddenly sinketh.

" Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread:
It reached the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead.

The ancient Mariner is saved in the Pilot's boat.

" Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drowned
My body lay afloat;
But, swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot's boat.

" Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

" I moved my lips — the Pilot shrieked
And fell down in a fit;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

" I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
' Ha ! ha ! ' quoth he, ' full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row.'

" And now, all in my own countree,
I stood on the firm land!
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

" ' O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!'
The Hermit crossed his brow.
' Say quick,' quoth he, ' I bid thee say —
What manner of man art thou?'

The ancient Mariner earnestly entreateth the Hermit to shrieve him; and the penance of life falls on him.

" Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free.

" Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns;
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

And ever and anon throughout his future life an agony constraineth him to travel from land to land,

" I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me:
To him my tale I teach.

" What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The wedding-guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are:
And hark the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer!

" O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide, wide sea:
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemèd there to be.

" O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company ! —

" To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay !

and to teach, by his own example, love and reverence to all things that God made and loveth.

" Farewell, farewell ! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest !
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

" He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone : and now the Wedding-Guest
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn :
A sadder and a wiser man
He rose the morrow morn.

KUBLA KHAN: OR, A VISION IN A DREAM

A FRAGMENT

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree :
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.

So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And here were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momently was forced;
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momently the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.

Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

ROBERT SOUTHEY (1774–1843)

Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey, from their residence in the Lake district of Westmoreland, were known as the Lake Poets. Though Southey's poetry was one of the animating influences in Romanticism, it is intrinsically of less merit than that of his brother "Lakers"; his prose is much better, as in the famous *Life of Nelson*. His longer poems — *Thalaba*, *The Curse of Kehama*, *Madoc*, and *Roderick* — are highly romantic (the first two oriental) in subject and coloring. To-day he is known by several of his shorter poems: *The Cataract of Lodore*, *Well of St. Keyne*, *Inchcape Rock*, *Bishop Hatto*, and, most popular, *The Battle of Blenheim*.

THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM

It was a summer evening,
Old Kaspar's work was done,
And he before his cottage door
Was sitting in the sun,
And by him sported on the green
His little grandchild Wilhelmine.

She saw her brother Peterkin
Roll something large and round,

Which he beside the rivulet
In playing there had found;
He came to ask what he had found,
That was so large, and smooth, and round.

Old Kaspar took it from the boy,
Who stood expectant by;
And then the old man shook his head,
And, with a natural sigh,
"'Tis some poor fellow's skull," said he,
"Who fell in the great victory.

"I find them in the garden,
For there's many here about;
And often when I go to plough,
The ploughshare turns them out!
For many thousand men," said he,
"Were slain in that great victory."

"Now tell us what 'twas all about,"
Young Peterkin, he cries;
And little Wilhelmine looks up
With wonder-waiting eyes;
"Now tell us all about the war,
And what they fought each other for."

"It was the English," Kaspar cried,
"Who put the French to rout;
But what they fought each other for,
I could not well make out;
But everybody said," quoth he,
"That 'twas a famous victory.

"My father lived at Blenheim then,
Yon little stream hard by;
They burnt his dwelling to the ground,
And he was forced to fly;
So with his wife and child he fled,
Nor had he where to rest his head.

" With fire and sword the country round
Was wasted far and wide,
And many a childing mother then,
And new-born baby died;
But things like that, you know, must be
At every famous victory.

" They say it was a shocking sight
After the field was won;
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sun;
But things like that, you know, must be
After a famous victory.

" Great praise the Duke of Marlbro' won
And our good Prince Eugene; "
" Why 'twas a very wicked thing! "
Said little Wilhelmine;
" Nay . . nay. . my little girl," quoth he,
" It was a famous victory.

" And everybody praised the Duke
Who this great fight did win."
" But what good came of it at last? "
Quoth little Peterkin.
" Why that I cannot tell," said he,
" But 'twas a famous victory."

CHARLES LAMB (1775–1834)

Charles Lamb, the friend of Coleridge and admirer of Wordsworth, the most exquisite and lovable of English essayists, one of the noblest and simplest of gentlemen, and the most unselfish of brothers, toiled for the greater part of his life as a clerk in a great commercial house, surmounting drudgery, disappointment, and misfortune with gentle cheerfulness and sympathetic humor. To devoted care for his talented sister Mary, who in a fit of insanity had killed her mother, Lamb sacrificed his life. He never married. " At times," writes Professor

Long, "the malady would return to Mary, giving sure warning of its terrible approach; and then brother and sister might be seen walking silently, hand in hand, to the gates of the asylum, their cheeks wet with tears. One must remember this, as well as Lamb's humble lodgings and the drudgery of his daily work, if he would appreciate the pathos of *The Old Familiar Faces*, or the heroism which shines through the most human and the most delightful essays in our language, — the *Essays of Elia*."

THE OLD FAMILIAR FACES

I have had playmates, I have had companions,
In my days of childhood, in my joyful schooldays;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have been laughing, I have been carousing,
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom cronies;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I loved a love once, fairest among women;
Closed are her doors on me, I must not see her —
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man;
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly;
Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces.

Ghost-like I paced round the haunts of my childhood,
Earth seemed a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

Friend of my bosom, thou more than a brother,
Why wert not thou born in my father's dwelling?
So might we talk of the old familiar faces —

How some they have died, and some they have left me,
And some are taken from me; all are departed;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

LEIGH HUNT (1784–1859)

Leigh Hunt, like Charles Lamb, is better known for his prose than for his verse. An essayist, critic, and journalist, he wrote voluminously for many years, often radically and always hastily; but his sincere if somewhat florid appreciation of Romantic poetry was an inspiration to men who were far greater poets than he. Of a lively and sanguine temperament, of magnetic enthusiasms and a luxurious but not profound imagination, he seemed always to be intoxicated with his ideas and emotions. His vision of *Abou Ben Adhem* is among the best known short poems in the language.

ABOU BEN ADHEM

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold.
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
"What writest thou?" The vision raised its head,
And, with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, "The names of those who love the Lord."
"And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so,"
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still; and said, "I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men."

The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
It came again, with a great wakening light.
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed, —
And, lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest!

2. THE POETS OF SOCIAL REVOLT

The variations of mood and treatment in the Romantic poetry of the first half of the nineteenth century are due rather to the distinctive temperaments of individual poets than to any marked divergence of poetic " tendencies " or " schools." There is, however, sufficient kinship between certain poets of the first quarter of the century to justify the heading of this sketch.

As we have seen, Coleridge and Wordsworth were early affected by an enthusiasm for the French Revolution and for the spirit of freedom and equality which it seemed to breathe. But these poets were soon turned from their inclination by the violence which accompanied the Revolution, and by a profound disappointment in the results of the struggle. It was reserved for two later writers, BYRON and SHELLEY, to divine and express the poetic significance of this revolutionary spirit. These young men were poets of brilliant genius and of independent spirit. Both were devoted lovers of liberty, and both carried their love of liberty so far as to be convinced of the necessity of breaking away from the traditions — and from what they regarded as the unnatural restraints — of organized society. To be sure, their distinctive differences of character were as marked as their points of likeness. Byron was a man of ungoverned passions, animal enthusiasms, tremendous egotism, cynical and, sometimes, pessimistic, temperament. Shelley, on the other hand, was averse to sensual indulgence and generous to a fault; he seemed rather a dweller in some ethereal world than a creature of this earth. As a writer, Byron was naturally glorious in rhetoric but hasty and careless in composition; charged with intellectual force, but deficient in imagination and poetic earnestness; Shelley was a dreamer, imaginative, unpractical, but an exquisite artist, a poet in every fibre. Yet, in spite of these differences in character and art, each was, in his own way, a poet of radicalism or revolt.

GEORGE GORDON BYRON (1788–1824)

Of all English poets none has been acclaimed so early in his career with such unstinted and general applause as was Lord Byron. Unlike Keats or Wordsworth or Browning, whose growth into popular favor was slow, Byron achieved that favor almost at a single leap. As he himself says, after the publication of the first two cantos of *Childe Harold*,

"I awoke to find myself famous." His poems were received abroad even more enthusiastically than at home. Taine, the great French critic, declares that "all styles appear dull beside his," and that "he is so great that from him alone we shall learn more truths of his country than from all the rest combined"; even Goethe, the German poet and critic, has said that the English "can show no poet who is to be compared with him." Byron's influence over the literature of foreign nations has been very great indeed. In continental Europe his reputation rivalled even that of Shakespeare, and it has scarcely waned even to the present day.

Not so in England. Despite his brilliant genius and wonderful poetic ability, Byron's decline in the favor of both English critic and English reader was as sure as his ascent was rapid. Nor are the causes far to seek. Byron was a poet of the Revolution. He caught the spirit of his age in representing the reaction of a new century against cant and hypocrisy, in society, religion, and politics. He wrote, moreover, with an assured strength, a spirited abandon, a splendid "sweep and energy" that at first carried all before him. His subjects were pleasing; his lyric and narrative intensity and his reckless humor compelled attention; his fascinating personality shone clear and winsome through every line of work. And so, when his star arose, his contemporaries were first attracted; then they marvelled, then enthusiastically admired. But he wrote with little artistic finish; and many, especially those at whose social and religious ideals he had jeered, denounced his poetry as lacking in high seriousness, spirituality, comprehension of life, natural and human, reverence for the decent and divine. These charges were not altogether just: his style is rapid, nervous, direct, incisive, and exhilarating. Though his Titanic heroes in their revolt against authority may be sometimes theatrical, sometimes profane, he shows in *The Prisoner of Chillon* and *Prometheus* a real sympathy for the martyrs of mankind; in the later cantos of *Childe Harold* he sounds the note of patriotism and historic woe; in many a poem, the diapason of nature in her changing moods. Much of his poetry, to be sure, was written for the fashion and the time; that of course fails now of its appeal. His contemporaries of the sober kind found him (and with reason) not infrequently flippant. In his *Don Juan*, which some consider his best and most characteristic work, he seemed even to delight in defying the proprieties. His cynicism is often tedious, and his sincerity sometimes doubtful. So his star has for a season waned. But it is not burnt out; merely eclipsed. As younger and more conventional poets pass from the zenith and the fashion of radicalism returns, Byron will again

be increasingly read and enjoyed. His *Childe Harold* will live as long as the historic sense remains with man; and *Chillon*, *Mazeppa*, *The Prophecy of Dante*, and *Don Juan*, while man is virile, adventurous, freedom-loving, passionate, and heroic.

1788–1812. — George Gordon Byron was born in London, January, 1788, the descendant of one of the oldest houses of English nobility. His father, Captain Byron of the English army, was a man of reckless and dissolute habits; his mother was a haughty and very foolish woman, quite incapable of training her son wisely. On the death of his great-uncle, the "wicked" Lord Byron, George, when only ten years old, came into the title and estates of the family. Not long after this he went to school at Harrow, and afterward to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he remained about three years. We may imagine him at this time a handsome, high-spirited boy, headstrong, self-willed, passionate. Owing to a deformation of one foot, he was somewhat lame; yet he was athletic and reckless in sports. When nineteen years of age, he issued a collection of verses entitled *Hours of Idleness*. This the *Edinburgh Review* ridiculed in a way so exasperating to the young poet that two years later he published a brilliant satirical reply in verse, which he called *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. This same year, 1809, he took his seat in the House of Lords, and immediately thereafter departed for travel through the countries around the Mediterranean, a journey in which he spent two years.

1812–1816. — Returning to England with the first two cantos of *The Pilgrimage of Childe Harold*, Byron was induced to publish them, and, as a result, achieved unparalleled popularity. The poem itself is characteristic — full of the author's individuality — and is based upon impressions of his journey. During the next four years he wrote half a dozen tales in verse, *The Corsair*, *The Siege of Corinth*, etc.; each new production was hailed with increased delight and enthusiasm. In 1815 he married a Miss Milbanke, but the union proved most unhappy, and the couple separated within a year. English society sided with the wife, and Byron now found himself as unpopular as he had before been popular. Hurt and angry, in 1816 he left England, never to return.

1816–1824. — During this exile his pen was even more active than before. First, he spent several months at Geneva with Shelley and his wife, and wrote *The Prisoner of Chillon* and the third canto of *Childe Harold*. The next year he went to Venice, where, in the midst of a life of reckless dissipation, he managed to finish his *Manfred* and another canto of *Childe Harold*, and to follow these with *Mazeppa*

and the first part of *Don Juan*. We next see him at Ravenna plotting against the Austrian rulers of Italy, then at Pisa with Shelley again, and finally at Genoa. The Greeks were at this time struggling for independence from Turkey, and Byron with characteristic impetuosity threw himself into their cause. Late in 1823 he embarked for Greece, where he was invited to a congress at Salona, which had for its purpose to offer him the crown of Greece. But enfeebled by exposure and disease he was even then upon his death-bed. His life ended at Missolonghi, April 19, 1824, — just as it was beginning to give promise of some practical service to humanity.

Byron is best represented by his longer poems; but these are of such a nature that it is very difficult to make extracts from them which will preserve the flavor of the whole. Of the *Childe Harold*, the strongest canto is undoubtedly the third, which contains some of the poet's best descriptive and reflective stanzas. Indeed, in the third and fourth cantos are to be found passages that deserve to be ranked with the best poetry of the century. *Manfred*, another of his longer poems, is well worth reading in its entirety. Some of his shorter lyrics have the ring of inevitable art, — simple, passionate, and beautiful, such as *Fare Thee Well*, *She Walks in Beauty*, *Know Ye the Land*, *The Isles of Greece*, *Maid of Athens*, and the *Lines on Completing my Thirty-Sixth Year*. *The Prisoner of Chillon*, which is given below, was written at the most fruitful period of his life. It has not the love-interest or the passion for reckless adventure of many of Byron's poems, yet it furnishes a fine example of his powers of description, his simplicity of style, his directness and vigor, and his enthusiasm for liberty of conscience. The few stanzas from *Childe Harold* — we wish they could be more — are added merely to give the student a taste of, and for, that splendid poem.

THE PRISONER OF CHILLON

I

My hair is grey, but not with years,
Nor grew it white
In a single night,
As men's have grown from sudden fears;
My limbs are bowed, though not with toil,
But rusted with a vile repose,

For they have been a dungeon's spoil,
  And mine has been the fate of those
To whom the goodly earth and air
Are banned, and barred — forbidden fare;
But this was for my father's faith
I suffered chains and courted death;
That father perished at the stake
For tenets he would not forsake;
And for the same his lineal race
In darkness found a dwelling place;
We were seven — who now are one;
  Six in youth, and one in age,
Finished as they had begun,
  Proud of Persecution's rage;
One in fire, and two in field,
Their belief with blood have sealed,
Dying as their father died,
For the God their foes denied;
Three were in a dungeon cast,
Of whom this wreck is left the last.

II

There are seven pillars of Gothic mould
In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,
There are seven columns, massy and grey,
Dim with a dull imprisoned ray,
A sunbeam which hath lost its way,
And through the crevice and the cleft
Of the thick wall is fallen and left;
Creeping o'er the floor so damp,
Like a marsh's meteor lamp:
And in each pillar there is a ring,
  And in each ring there is a chain;
That iron is a cankering thing,
  For in these limbs its teeth remain,
With marks that will not wear away,
Till I have done with this new day,

Which now is painful to these eyes,
Which have not seen the sun so rise
For years — I cannot count them o'er,
I lost their long and heavy score
When my last brother drooped and died,
And I lay living by his side.

III

They chained us each to a column stone,
And we were three — yet, each alone;
We could not move a single pace,
We could not see each other's face,
But with that pale and livid light
That made us strangers in our sight:
And thus together — yet apart,
Fettered in hand, but joined in heart,
'Twas still some solace, in the dearth
Of the pure elements of earth,
To hearken to each other's speech,
And each turn comforter to each
With some new hope, or legend old,
Or song heroically bold;
But even these at length grew cold.
Our voices took a dreary tone,
An echo of the dungeon stone,
A grating sound — not full and free,
As they of yore were wont to be:
It might be fancy — but to me
They never sounded like our own.

IV

I was the eldest of the three,
And to uphold and cheer the rest
I ought to do — and did my best —
And each did well in his degree.
The youngest, whom my father loved,
Because our mother's brow was given

To him, with eyes as blue as heaven —
  For him my soul was sorely moved;
And truly might it be distressed
To see such bird in such a nest;
For he was beautiful as day —
  (When day was beautiful to me
  As to young eagles, being free) —
  A polar day, which will not see
A sunset till its summer's gone,
  Its sleepless summer of long light,
The snow-clad offspring of the sun:
  And thus he was as pure and bright,
And in his natural spirit gay,
With tears for nought but others' ills,
And then they flowed like mountain rills,
Unless he could assuage the woe
Which he abhorred to view below.

V

The other was as pure of mind,
But formed to combat with his kind;
Strong in his frame, and of a mood
Which 'gainst the world in war had stood,
And perished in the foremost rank
  With joy: — but not in chains to pine:
His spirit withered with their clank,
  I saw it silently decline —
  And so perchance in sooth did mine:
But yet I forced it on to cheer
Those relics of a home so dear.
He was a hunter of the hills,
  Had followed there the deer and wolf;
  To him his dungeon was a gulf,
And fettered feet the worst of ills.

VI

Lake Leman lies by Chillon's walls:
A thousand feet in depth below

Its massy waters meet and flow;
Thus much the fathom-line was sent
From Chillon's snow-white battlement,
  Which round about the wave enthralls:
A double dungeon wall and wave
Have made — and like a living grave
Below the surface of the lake
The dark vault lies wherein we lay,
We heard it ripple night and day;
  Sounding o'er our heads it knocked;
And I have felt the winter's spray
Wash through the bars when winds were high
And wanton in the happy sky;
  And then the very rock hath rocked,
  And I have felt it shake, unshocked,
Because I could have smiled to see
The death that would have set me free.

VII

I said my nearer brother pined,
I said his mighty heart declined,
He loathed and put away his food;
It was not that 'twas coarse and rude,
For we were used to hunters' fare,
And for the like had little care:
The milk drawn from the mountain goat
Was changed for water from the moat,
Our bread was such as captives' tears
Have moistened many a thousand years,
Since man first pent his fellow men
Like brutes within an iron den;
But what were these to us or him?
These wasted not his heart or limb;
My brother's soul was of that mould
Which in a palace had grown cold,
Had his free breathing been denied
The range of the steep mountain's side;
But why delay the truth? — he died.

I saw, and could not hold his head,
Nor reach his dying hand — nor dead,
Though hard I strove, but strove in vain,
To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.
He died — and they unlocked his chain,
And scooped for him a shallow grave
Even from the cold earth of our cave.
I begged them, as a boon, to lay
His corse in dust whereon the day
Might shine — it was a foolish thought,
But then within my brain it wrought,
That even in death his freeborn breast
In such a dungeon could not rest.
I might have spared my idle prayer —
They coldly laughed — and laid him there:
The flat and turfless earth above
The being we so much did love;
His empty chain above it leant,
Such murder's fitting monument!

VIII

But he, the favorite and the flower,
Most cherished since his natal hour,
His mother's image in fair face,
The infant love of all his race,
His martyred father's dearest thought,
My latest care, for whom I sought
To hoard my life, that his might be
Less wretched now, and one day free;
He, too, who yet had held untired
A spirit natural or inspired —
He, too, was struck, and day by day
Was withered on the stalk away.
Oh, God! it is a fearful thing
To see the human soul take wing
In any shape, in any mood: —
I've seen it rushing forth in blood,
I've seen it on the breaking ocean

Strive with a swoln convulsive motion,
I've seen the sick and ghastly bed
Of Sin delirious with its dread;
But these were horrors — this was woe
Unmixed with such — but sure and slow;
He faded, and so calm and meek,
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
So tearless, yet so tender — kind,
And grieved for those he left behind;
With all the while a cheek whose bloom
Was as a mockery of the tomb,
Whose tints as gently sunk away
As a departing rainbow's ray;
An eye of most transparent light,
That almost made the dungeon bright;
And not a word of murmur — not
A groan o'er his untimely lot, —
A little talk of better days,
A little hope my own to raise,
For I was sunk in silence — lost
In this last loss, of all the most;
And then the sighs he would suppress
Of fainting nature's feebleness,
More slowly drawn, grew less and less:
I listened, but I could not hear —
I called, for I was wild with fear;
I knew 'twas hopeless, but my dread
Would not be thus admonished;
I called, and thought I heard a sound —
I burst my chain with one strong bound,
And rushed to him: — I found him not,
I only stirred in this black spot,
I only lived — *I* only drew
The accursed breath of dungeon-dew;
The last — the sole — the dearest link
Between me and the eternal brink,
Which bound me to my failing race,
Was broken in this fatal place.

One on the earth, and one beneath —
My brothers — both had ceased to breathe:
I took that hand which lay so still,
Alas! my own was full as chill;
I had not strength to stir, or strive,
But felt that I was still alive —
A frantic feeling when we know
That what we love shall ne'er be so.
I know not why
I could not die,
I had no earthly hope — but faith,
And that forbade a selfish death.

IX

What next befell me then and there
I know not well — I never knew:
First came the loss of light and air,
And then of darkness too:
I had no thought, no feeling — none —
Among the stones I stood a stone,
And was, scarce conscious what I wist,
As shrubless crags within the mist;
For all was blank, and bleak, and grey;
It was not night — it was not day —
It was not even the dungeon-light,
So hateful to my heavy sight,
But vacancy absorbing space,
And fixedness — without a place;
There were no stars — no earth — no time —
No check — no change — no good — no crime —
But silence, and a stirless breath
Which neither was of life nor death;
A sea of stagnant idleness,
Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless!

X

A light broke in upon my brain, —
It was the carol of a bird;

It ceased, and then it came again,
  The sweetest song ear ever heard,
And mine was thankful till my eyes
Ran over with the glad surprise,
And they that moment could not see
I was the mate of misery;
But then by dull degrees came back
My senses to their wonted track;
I saw the dungeon walls and floor
Close slowly round me as before,
I saw the glimmer of the sun
Creeping as it before had done,
But through the crevice where it came
That bird was perched, as fond and tame,
  And tamer than upon the tree;
A lovely bird, with azure wings,
And song that said a thousand things,
  And seemed to say them all for me!
I never saw its like before,
I ne'er shall see its likeness more:
It seemed like me to want a mate,
But was not half so desolate,
And it was come to love me when
None lived to love me so again,
And, cheering from my dungeon's brink,
Had brought me back to feel and think.
I know not if it late were free,
  Or broke its cage to perch on mine,
But knowing well captivity,
  Sweet bird! I could not wish for thine!
Or if it were, in wingèd guise,
A visitant from Paradise;
For — Heaven forgive that thought! the while
Which made me both to weep and smile —
I sometimes deemed that it might be
My brother's soul come down to me;
But then at last away it flew,
And then 'twas mortal — well I knew.

For he would never thus have flown,
And left me twice so doubly lone, —
Lone — as the corse within its shroud,
Lone — as a solitary cloud,
A single cloud on a sunny day,
While all the rest of heaven is clear,
A frown upon the atmosphere,
That hath no business to appear
When skies are blue, and earth is gay.

XI

A kind of change came in my fate,
My keepers grew compassionate;
I know not what had made them so,
They were inured to sights of woe,
But so it was: — my broken chain
With links unfastened did remain,
And it was liberty to stride
Along my cell from side to side,
And up and down, and then athwart,
And tread it over every part;
And round the pillars one by one,
Returning where my walk begun,
Avoiding only, as I trod,
My brothers' graves without a sod;
For if I thought with heedless tread
My step profaned their lowly bed,
My breath came gaspingly and thick,
And my crushed heart fell blind and sick.

XII

I made a footing in the wall,
It was not therefrom to escape,
For I had buried one and all
Who loved me in a human shape;
And the whole earth would henceforth be
A wider prison unto me:

No child — no sire — no kin had I,
No partner in my misery;
I thought of this and I was glad,
For thought of them had made me mad;
But I was curious to ascend
To my barred windows, and to bend
Once more upon the mountains high
The quiet of a loving eye.

XIII

I saw them — and they were the same,
They were not changed like me in frame;
I saw their thousand years of snow
On high — their wide long lake below,
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow;
I heard the torrents leap and gush
O'er channelled rock and broken bush;
I saw the white-walled distant town,
And whiter sails go skimming down;
And then there was a little isle,
Which in my very face did smile,
The only one in view;
A small green isle, it seemed no more,
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,
But in it there were three tall trees,
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,
And by it there were waters flowing,
And on it there were young flowers growing,
Of gentle breath and hue.
The fish swam by the castle wall,
And they seemed joyous each and all;
The eagle rode the rising blast,
Methought he never flew so fast
As then to me he seemed to fly;
And then new tears came in my eye,
And I felt troubled — and would fain
I had not left my recent chain;
And, when I did descend again,

The darkness of my dim abode
Fell on me as a heavy load;
It was as is a new-dug grave,
Closing o'er one we sought to save, —
And yet my glance, too much oppressed,
Had almost need of such a rest.

XIV

It might be months, or years, or days,
I kept no count — I took no note,
I had no hope my eyes to raise
And clear them of their dreary mote;
At last men came to set me free;
I asked not why, and recked not where;
It was at length the same to me,
Fettered or fetterless to be,
I learned to love despair.
And thus when they appeared at last,
And all my bonds aside were cast,
These heavy walls to me had grown
A hermitage — and all my own!
And half I felt as they were come
To tear me from a second home:
With spiders I had friendship made,
And watched them in their sullen trade,
Had seen the mice by moonlight play,
And why should I feel less than they?
We were all inmates of one place,
And I, the monarch of each race,
Had power to kill — yet, strange to tell!
In quiet we had learned to dwell:
My very chains and I grew friends,
So much a long communion tends
To make us what we are: — even I
Regained my freedom with a sigh.

STANZAS FROM CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

(CANTO III, XXI–XXVIII: WATERLOO)

There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gathered then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell;
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!

Did ye not hear it? — No; 'twas but the wind,
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet. —
But hark! that heavy sound breaks in once more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!
Arm! arm! it is — it is — the cannon's opening roar!

Within a windowed niche of that high hall
Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain; he did hear
That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear.
And when they smiled because he deemed it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretched his father on a bloody bier,
And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell.
He rushed into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blushed at the praise of their own loveliness;

And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated: who could guess
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise!

And there was mounting in hot haste: the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;
While thronged the citizens with terror dumb,
Or whispering with white lips — "The foe! They come! they come!"

And wild and high the "Cameron's Gathering" rose,
The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills
Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes;
How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills
Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills
Their mountain pipe, so fill the mountaineers
With the fierce native daring which instils
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's ears!

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,
Dewy with Nature's tear-drops, as they pass,
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave, — alas!
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but above shall grow
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living valor, rolling on the foe,
And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,

The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
The morn the marshalling in arms — the day
Battle's magnificently stern array!
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
The earth is covered thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heaped and pent,
Rider and horse — friend, foe, — in one red burial blent!

(CANTO IV, CXXXIX–CXLV: THE COLISEUM)

And here the buzz of eager nations ran,
In murmured pity, or loud-roared applause,
As man was slaughtered by his fellow-man.
And wherefore slaughtered? wherefore, but because
Such were the bloody Circus' genial laws,
And the imperial pleasure. — Wherefore not?
What matters where we fall to fill the maws
Of worms — on battle-plains or listed spot?
Both are but theatres where the chief actors rot.

I see before me the Gladiator lie:
He leans upon his hand — his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony,
And his drooped head sinks gradually low —
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now
The arena swims around him — he is gone,
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hailed the wretch who won.

He heard it, but he heeded not — his eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far away;
He recked not of the life he lost nor prize,
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,
There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother — he, their sire,
Butchered to make a Roman holiday —
All this rushed with his blood — Shall he expire,
And unavenged? — Arise! ye Goths, and glut your ire!

But here, where murder breathed her bloody steam;
And here, where buzzing nations choked the ways,
And roared or murmured like a mountain-stream
Dashing or winding as its torrent strays;
Here where the Roman million's blame or praise
Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd,
My voice sounds much — and fall the stars' faint rays
On the arena void — seats crushed — walls bowed —
And galleries, where my steps seem echoes strangely loud.

A ruin — yet what ruin! from its mass
Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been reared;
Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,
And marvel where the spoil could have appeared.
Hath it indeed been plundered, or but cleared?
Alas! developed, opens the decay,
When the colossal fabric's form is neared;
It will not bear the brightness of the day,
Which streams too much on all years, man, have reft away.

But when the rising moon begins to climb
Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there;
When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,
And the low night-breeze waves along the air
The garland-forest, which the gray walls wear,
Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head;
When the light shines serene but doth not glare,—
Then in this magic circle raise the dead:
Heroes have trod this spot — 'tis on their dust ye tread.

"While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand;
When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall;
And when Rome falls — the World." From our own land
Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty wall
In Saxon times, which we are wont to call
Ancient; and these three mortal things are still
On their foundations, and unaltered all:
Rome and her Ruin past Redemption's skill,
The World, the same wide den — of thieves, or what ye will.

(CANTO IV, CLXXVIII–CLXXXIV: THE OCEAN)

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society, where none intrudes,
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean — roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin — his control
Stops with the shore; — upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknelled, uncoffined, and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths — thy fields
Are not a spoil for him — thou dost arise
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray,
And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth — there let him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take

Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war:
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride, or spoils of Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee —
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
Thy waters washed them power while they were free,
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts: — not so thou,
Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play —
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow —
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests: in all time,
Calm or convulsed — in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving; — boundless, endless, and sublime —
The image of Eternity — the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy
I wantoned with thy breakers — they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror — 'twas a pleasing fear,
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane — as I do here.

KNOW YE THE LAND?

Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle
  Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime?
Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle,
  Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime?
Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine;
Where the light wings of Zephyr, oppressed with perfume,
Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gúl in her bloom;
Where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit,
And the voice of the nightingale never is mute:
Where the tints of the earth, and the hues of the sky,
In color though varied, in beauty may vie,
And the purple of ocean is deepest in dye;
Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,
And all, save the spirit of man, is divine?
'Tis the clime of the East; 'tis the land of the Sun —
Can he smile on such deeds as his children have done?
Oh! wild as the accents of lovers' farewell
Are the hearts which they bear, and the tales which they tell.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY

She walks in beauty, like the night
  Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
  Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellowed to that tender light
  Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
  Had half impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
  Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
  How pure, how dear, their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent! 18

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY (1792–1822)

The quality of Shelley's genius and the peculiarity of his work are such that probably no great English poet lends himself to criticism less easily than he. His poetry is so iridescent, so ethereal, so mysteriously and beautifully expressive of the more subtle and spiritual states of mind, that it practically defies analysis. From his earliest youth he was a striking figure. Of imagination all compact, innocent at heart, and generous of disposition, he was at the same time unpractical in thought, impatient of restraint, and, from the first, rebellious against constituted authority, at war with existing institutions, — a self-elected prophet stirred with the passion of reforming the world. To his mind the church, the state, the social order — all were corrupt, results of tyranny and superstition, and, as such, to be swept aside. Accordingly he denounced the marriage bond, declared himself an atheist, and labored in splendid but nebulous verse to realize his "visions of humanity made perfect"; to build an earthly tabernacle of heavenly liberty and of love and unity among the nations. Whatever the errors of youthful irresponsibility, not all his enthusiasms were of the stuff that empty dreams are made of. He prognosticated the noble ideal of a Parliament of man which by "the common sense of all shall hold a fretful realm in awe," sung later by Tennyson in *Locksley Hall*, and the project for peace and amity advocated to-day by practical statesmen the world over, as not impossible of gradual realization by the united effort of law-abiding and liberty-loving nations.

When we study his poetry for its own sake, we forget the man in our admiration of the poet, for it is poetry such as the world has rarely seen: not philosophical like that of Wordsworth or Browning, or popular like that of Burns or Tennyson, but suffused with a creative beauty of a purely poetical quality which has appeared in no other English poet with the exception of Spenser, and, to a lesser degree, Keats. Its dazzling images, its rapid rhythms, its grace and delicacy

of touch, its exquisite melodies and harmonies, win us to forget the vagaries of the reformer in the perfection of the artist. The last years of Shelley were his best. His excesses of thought and style seemed to be passing under the yoke. His constant reading and study were bringing him into greater sympathy and conformity with the world. Had it not been for his early tragical death, it is difficult to estimate to what heights his poetic genius might have attained.

1792–1818. — Shelley was born in August, 1792, near Horsham in the county of Sussex. His father, Sir Timothy Shelley, was a typically conservative, practical country squire, never in the least degree able to understand or appreciate his brilliant son. At the age of thirteen the boy was sent to Eton, where he was noted for his impatience of restraint and his independent spirit, as well as for the astonishing ease with which he mastered the classics and other favorite subjects of his course. When eighteen years old he entered Oxford; but his sceptical beliefs, and especially his publication of a pamphlet entitled *The Necessity for Atheism*, brought about his expulsion within a year. From Oxford he went to London, where he met Harriet Westbrook, a romantic girl of sixteen. Shelley was heir to a large fortune. Harriet's elder sister, a worldly schemer, played matchmaker, and when, a little later, Harriet told Shelley — a generous youth of nineteen — that she loved him and that she must be rescued from a cruel father, Shelley quixotically proposed elopement and marriage. He and his girl-wife wandered through various parts of England, Wales, and Ireland. During this time he composed his first long (and somewhat crude) poem, *Queen Mab*. Returning to London in 1813, he became intimate with the family of William Godwin, a well-known radical thinker of the time, who greatly strengthened Shelley in his revolutionary principles. The next year what was to be expected came to pass: Harriet and Shelley, realizing their incompatibility and knowing that their marriage had been a mistake, separated. Two years later, after Harriet's tragic death, Shelley married Mary Godwin. These events estranged the British public from Shelley, who, after the publication of two or three important poems which were somewhat coldly received, finally left England for Italy. This was in 1818, when he was in his twenty-sixth year.

1818–1822. — These were the most important years of Shelley's life. Much of the time was spent in the company of Byron, whom he had previously met on a visit to Switzerland in 1816. Besides many shorter poems, such as the *Skylark*, the *Cloud*, the *Ode to the West Wind*, and the *Ode to Liberty*, he produced, during these years, two

great tragedies, *Prometheus Unbound* and *The Cenci*. In 1821, the last year of his life, he wrote his *Adonais*, upon the death of Keats — a poem which ranks with Milton's *Lycidas* and Tennyson's *In Memoriam* as among the best elegies in the English language. In July of the next year, 1822, when not yet thirty years of age, Shelley was drowned while sailing in the Gulf of Leghorn. His body was discovered after a few days and was cremated on the shore where it was found. The ashes were gathered up and buried beside those of Keats in the little English cemetery at Rome.

Shelley's longer poems are for the most part so far beyond and beside the facts and experiences of everyday life that it is very difficult to enter into his world. But many of his lyrics and shorter poems are free from this aloofness and idiosyncrasy; and from them the reader will most readily learn the wonderful force of the poet's genius.

Of these shorter lyrics the best known are those written during the last years of his life. Though his *Cenci* shows astonishing dramatic power, and his reflective poems great beauty, he excels especially as a poet of the emotional and prophetic type.

TO A SKYLARK

Hail to thee, blithe spirit —
Bird thou never wert —
That from Heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest;
Like a cloud of fire
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are bright'ning,
Thou dost float and run;
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven
In the broad daylight,
Thou art unseen, — but yet I hear thy shrill delight,

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear,
Until we hardly see — we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when Night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and Heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, — which overflows her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,

Scattering unbeholden
Its aërial hue
Among the flowers and grass which screen it from the view:

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet those heavy-wingèd thieves:

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers, —
All that ever was
Joyous and clear and fresh, — thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus hymeneal,
Or triumphal chaunt,
Matched with thine, would be all
But an empty vaunt, —
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields or waves or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be:
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:
Thou lovest — but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream —
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate and pride and fear,
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then — as I am listening now.

THE CLOUD

I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,
From the seas and the streams;
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams.
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken
The sweet buds every one,

When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,
As she dances about the sun.
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under,
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,
And their great pines groan aghast;
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,
While I sleep in the arms of the blast.
Sublime on the towers of my skyey bowers,
Lightning my pilot sits;
In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,
It struggles and howls at fits;
Over earth and ocean, with gentle motion,
This pilot is guiding me,
Lured by the love of the genii that move
In the depths of the purple sea;
Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills,
Over the lakes and the plains,
Wherever he dream, under mountain or stream,
The Spirit he loves remains;
And I all the while bask in heaven's blue smile,
Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor eyes,
And his burning plumes outspread,
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,
When the morning star shines dead;
As on the jag of a mountain crag,
Which an earthquake rocks and swings,
An eagle alit one moment may sit
In the light of its golden wings.
And when sunset may breathe, from the lit sea beneath,
Its ardors of rest and of love,
And the crimson pall of eve may fall
From the depth of heaven above,

With wings folded I rest, on mine airy nest,
As still as a brooding dove.

That orbèd maiden, with white fire laden,
Whom mortals call the Moon,
Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor,
By the midnight breezes strewn;
And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,
Which only the angels hear,
May have broken the woof of my tent's thin roof,
The stars peep behind her and peer;
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,
Like a swarm of golden bees,
When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent,
Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,
Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high,
Are each paved with the moon and these.

I bind the sun's throne with a burning zone,
And the moon's with a girdle of pearl;
The volcanos are dim, and the stars reel and swim,
When the whirlwinds my banner unfurl.
From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape,
Over a torrent sea,
Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof, —
The mountains its columns be.
The triumphal arch, through which I march,
With hurricane, fire, and snow,
When the powers of the air are chained to my chair,
Is the million-colored bow;
The sphere-fire above its soft colors wove,
While the moist earth was laughing below.

I am the daughter of earth and water,
And the nursling of the sky;
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores;
I change, but I cannot die.

For after the rain, when with never a stain
The pavilion of heaven is bare,
And the winds and sunbeams with their convex gleams
Build up the blue dome of air,
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph, —
And out of the caverns of rain,
Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the tomb,
I arise and unbuild it again.

TO NIGHT

I

Swiftly walk over the western wave,
Spirit of Night!
Out of the misty eastern cave,
Where all the long and lone daylight
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,
Which make thee terrible and dear, —
Swift be thy flight!

II

Wrap thy form in a mantle gray,
Star-inwrought!
Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day;
Kiss her until she be wearied out:
Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand —
Come, long-sought!

III

When I arose and saw the dawn,
I sighed for thee;
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary Day turned to his rest,
Lingering like an unloved guest,
I sighed for thee.

IV

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
" Wouldst thou me? "
Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
Murmured like a noontide bee,
" Shall I nestle at thy side?
Wouldst thou me? " — and I replied,
" No, not thee! "

V

Death will come when thou art dead,
Soon, too soon;
Sleep will come when thou art fled;
Of neither would I ask the boon
I ask of thee, belovèd Night, —
Swift be thine approaching flight,
Come soon, soon!

STANZAS FROM ADONAIS

AN ELEGY UPON THE DEATH OF JOHN KEATS

Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not sleep —
He hath awakened from the dream of life —
'Tis we, who, lost in stormy visions, keep
With phantoms an unprofitable strife,
And in mad trance strike with our spirit's knife
Invulnerable nothings. — *We* decay
Like corpses in a charnel; fear and grief
Convulse us and consume us day by day,
And cold hopes swarm like worms within our living clay.

He has outsoared the shadow of our night;
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight,
Can touch him not and torture not again;
From the contagion of the world's slow stain

He is secure, and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown grey in vain;
Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

He lives, he wakes — 'tis Death is dead, not he;
Mourn not for Adonais. — Thou young Dawn,
Turn all thy dew to splendor, for from thee
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone;
Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan!
Cease, ye faint flowers and fountains, and thou Air,
Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst thrown
O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it bare
Even to the joyous stars which smile on its despair!

He is made one with Nature: there is heard
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder to the song of night's sweet bird;
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,
Spreading itself where'er that Power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own;
Which wields the world with never-wearied love,
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely: he doth bear
His part, while the one Spirit's plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling there
All new successions to the forms they wear;
Torturing th' unwilling dross that checks its flight
To its own likeness, as each mass may bear;
And bursting in its beauty and its might
From trees and beasts and men into the Heaven's light.

The splendors of the firmament of time
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not;
Like stars to their appointed height they climb,
And death is a low mist which cannot blot

The brightness it may veil. When lofty thought
Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,
And love and life contend in it for what
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live there
And move like winds of light on dark and stormy air.

. . . . . .

That Light whose smile kindles the Universe,
That Beauty in which all things work and move,
That Benediction which the eclipsing Curse
Of birth can quench not, that sustaining Love
Which, through the web of being blindly wove
By man and beast and earth and air and sea,
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst, now beams on me,
Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

The breath whose might I have invoked in song
Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven
Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng
Whose sails were never to the tempest given;
The massy earth and spherèd skies are riven!
I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar:
Whilst burning through the inmost veil of Heaven,
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are.

THE SPIRIT OF POETRY

(*From Prometheus Unbound*)

On a poet's lips I slept
Dreaming like a love-adept
In the sound his breathing kept;
Nor seeks nor finds he mortal blisses,
But feeds on the aërial kisses
Of shapes that haunt thought's wildernesses.
He will watch from dawn to gloom
The lake-reflected sun illume

The yellow bees in the ivy-bloom,
Nor heed nor see what things they be;
But from these create he can
Forms more real than living man,
Nurslings of immortality!

THE GLORY OF PROMETHEUS

(*From Prometheus Unbound*)

To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;
To defy Power which seems omnipotent;
To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;
Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;
This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory!

SONNET

OZYMANDIAS

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed.
And on the pedestal these words appear:
"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

3. A POET OF THE ÆSTHETIC TRANSITION

In the development of English poetry KEATS plays a very important part. Stopford Brooke says of him that he "went back to Spenser and especially to Shakespeare's minor poems to find his inspiration; to Greek and medieval life to find his subjects, and established, in doing so, that which has been called the *literary poetry* of England." And Saintsbury calls Keats "the forerunner of Tennyson, and through Tennyson, of all English poets since; the father of every English poet born within the century, who has not been a mere exception. He, as did no one of his own contemporaries, felt, expressed, and handed on the exact change wrought in English poetry by the great Romantic movement." To link the poetry of the future to the best in the poetic achievements of the past was the mission of John Keats. With him poetry was supreme; it existed not as an instrument of social revolt or of philosophical doctrine, but for the expression of beauty. Real poetry is not of any school. Its sweetness and its grace are Romantic and Classical alike. Freedom of conception and restraint of style are the twin servitors of the beauty for which poetry exists. This is the æsthetic view of literary art handed down not only by Tennyson, but by Rossetti, Morris, Swinburne, and more or less adopted by them from Keats.

JOHN KEATS (1795–1821)

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty, — that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

In these words is well expressed the poetical creed of John Keats, — passionate lover of beauty in all her phases, prophet and poet of the senses and their delights. Though his limited conditions shut him out from any direct acquaintance with the beauties of Grecian literature and art, he was nevertheless a Greek to the core of his beauty-worshipping nature. Though he could have known but little of medieval literature, few have grasped better than he the delightful spirit of medieval romance. His genius for the felicitous use of words is no less unerring than his instinct for the beautiful in the world of tastes and odors, sights and sounds. Like Spencer and Shelley, he is one of the most truly poetical of poets; like the former, at any rate, he drew his inspiration from the enchanted regions of the past. It is true that the poetry of Keats is lacking in that deeper thought and

spiritual uplift which we associate with the very highest order of poetry. But it is also true that this young poet died when barely twenty-five years of age, before he had fully outgrown his youthful faults, or developed the wisdom and high seriousness which are necessary to one who would rank with the first of poets. Yet, according to Matthew Arnold, "no one in English poetry, save Shakespeare, has quite the fascinating felicity of Keats, his perfection of loveliness."

1795–1817. — Keats was born in London, October, 1795. His father, a livery-stable keeper in humble circumstances, managed somehow to send his son, then seven or eight years old, to a good school just outside London, where the lad secured an elementary knowledge of Latin, and a very fair acquaintance, through dictionaries and translations, with classical mythology. When fifteen years of age, having lost his father and mother, the boy was apprenticed to a surgeon, with whom he worked and studied for five years. He had little love for the profession, however, and after spending two more years in the hospitals of London, he abandoned it altogether. In his schoolboy days Keats had made friends who awakened his love for poetry by lending him books, — the works of Chaucer, Chapman's *Homer*, and the *Faerie Queene* of Spenser; these same friends now introduced young Keats to Leigh Hunt and Shelley and other literary folk of London. About this time, 1817, when twenty-two years old, Keats brought out his first volume of verse — a collection crude and amateurish as a whole, yet containing one of the finest of all English sonnets, *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer*.

1817–1821. — In 1818, while still in his twenty-third year, Keats produced his *Endymion*, a poem with many faults of immaturity, but in no wise deserving the fierce assaults it called forth from the literary reviews of the time. Notwithstanding these attacks the poet worked on with unabated vigor, and in 1820 published, among other poems, *Hyperion*, which shows the influence of Milton, *The Eve of St. Agnes*, and the *Ode to a Grecian Urn*. About this time the seeds of consumption, which he had inherited, began to develop, and he soon knew that his days were numbered. In September, 1820, after publishing still another volume, the poet set sail for Italy, in hope that the milder climate might prolong his life. In vain; in February of the next year he died, and was buried in the Protestant cemetery in Rome.

The poetic development of Keats was very sure and rapid. From the first, much of his verse shows a surprising energy and freshness;

his later poems fully reveal the sense of color and form which distinguishes his poetry at its best. Of all his poems, perhaps the most delightful are the odes *On a Grecian Urn* and *To a Nightingale*, and the metrical romance, *The Eve of St. Agnes*, which has been called "the latest and most perfect flowering of the old Spenserian tree."

THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

I

St. Agnes' Eve — Ah, bitter chill it was!
The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;
The hare limped trembling through the frozen grass,
And silent was the flock in woolly fold:
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers while he told
His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
Like pious incense from a censer old,
Seemed taking flight for heaven without a death,
Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he saith.

II

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man;
Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his knees,
And back returneth, meagre, barefoot, wan,
Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees:
The sculptured dead on each side seem to freeze,
Emprisoned in black, purgatorial rails:
Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'ries,
He passeth by; and his weak spirit fails
To think how they may ache in icy hoods and mails.

III

Northward he turneth through a little door,
And scarce three steps, ere Music's golden tongue
Flattered to tears this agèd man and poor;
But no — already had his death-bell rung;
The joys of all his life were said and sung;

His was harsh penance on St. Agnes' Eve:
Another way he went, and soon among
Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,
And all night kept awake, for sinner's sake to grieve.

IV

That ancient Beadsman heard the prelude soft;
And so it chanced, for many a door was wide,
From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft,
The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to chide:
The level chambers, ready with their pride,
Were glowing to receive a thousand guests:
The carvèd angels, ever eager-eyed,
Stared, where upon their head the cornice rests,
With hair blown back, and wings put cross-wise on their breasts.

V

At length burst in the argent revelry,
With plume, tiara, and all rich array,
Numerous as shadows haunting fairily
The brain, new-stuffed, in youth, with triumphs gay
Of old romance. These let us wish away,
And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady there,
Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry day,
On love, and winged St. Agnes' saintly care,
As she had heard old dames full many times declare.

VI

They told her how, upon St. Agnes' Eve,
Young virgins might have visions of delight,
And soft adorings from their loves receive
Upon the honeyed middle of the night,
If ceremonies due they did aright;
As, supperless to bed they must retire,
And couch supine their beauties, lily white;
Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require
Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they desire.

VII

Full of this whim was thoughtful Madeline:
The music, yearning like a God in pain,
She scarcely heard: her maiden eyes divine,
Fixed on the floor, saw many a sweeping train
Pass by — she heeded not at all: in vain
Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier,
And back retired, not cooled by high disdain,
But she saw not: her heart was otherwhere;
She sighed for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest of the year.

VIII

She danced along with vague, regardless eyes,
Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and short:
The hallowed hour was near at hand: she sighs
Amid the timbrels, and the thronged resort
Of whisperers in anger, or in sport,
'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and scorn,
Hoodwinked with faery fancy, all amort,
Save to St. Agnes and her lambs unshorn,
And all the bliss to be before to-morrow morn.

IX

So, purposing each moment to retire,
She lingered still. Meantime, across the moors,
Had come young Porphyro, with heart on fire
For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,
Buttressed from moonlight, stands he, and implores
All saints to give him sight of Madeline,
But for one moment in the tedious hours,
That he might gaze and worship all unseen,
Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss — in sooth such things have been.

X

He ventures in: let no buzzed whisper tell:
All eyes be muffled, or a hundred swords

Will storm his heart, Love's fev'rous citadel:
For him those chambers held barbarian hordes,
Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,
Whose very dogs would execrations howl
Against his lineage: not one breast affords
Him any mercy, in that mansion foul,
Save one old beldame, weak in body and in soul.

XI

Ah, happy chance! the agèd creature came,
Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,
To where he stood, hid from the torch's flame,
Behind a broad hall-pillar, far beyond
The sound of merriment and chorus bland:
He startled her; but soon she knew his face,
And grasped his fingers in her palsied hand,
Saying, "Mercy, Porphyro! hie thee from this place;
They are all here to-night, the whole blood-thirsty race!

XII

"Get hence! get hence! there's dwarfish Hildebrand;
He had a fever late, and in the fit
He cursèd thee and thine, both house and land:
Then there's that old Lord Maurice, not a whit
More tame for his gray hairs — Alas me! flit!
Flit like a ghost away." — "Ah, Gossip dear,
We're safe enough; here in this arm-chair sit,
And tell me how" — "Good Saints! not here, not here:
Follow me, child, or else these stones will be thy bier."

XIII

He followed through a lowly archèd way,
Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty plume;
And as she muttered "Well-a — well-a-day!"
He found him in a little moonlight room,
Pale, latticed, chill, and silent as a tomb.
"Now tell me where is Madeline," said he,

" O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom
Which none but secret sisterhood may see,
When they St. Agnes' wool are weaving piously."

XIV

" St. Agnes! Ah! it is St. Agnes' Eve —
Yet men will murder upon holy days:
Thou must hold water in a witch's sieve,
And be liege-lord of all the Elves and Fays,
To venture so: it fills me with amaze
To see thee, Porphyro! — St. Agnes' Eve!
God's help! my lady fair the conjuror plays
This very night: good angels her deceive!
But let me laugh awhile, I've mickle time to grieve."

XV

Feebly she laugheth in the languid moon,
While Porphyro upon her face doth look,
Like puzzled urchin on an agèd crone
Who keepeth closed a wond'rous riddle-book,
As spectacled she sits in chimney nook.
But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when she told
His lady's purpose; and he scarce could brook
Tears, at the thought of those enchantments cold,
And Madeline asleep in lap of legends old.

XVI

Sudden a thought came like a full-blown rose,
Flushing his brow, and in his painèd heart
Made purple riot: then doth he propose
A stratagem, that makes the beldame start:
" A cruel man and impious thou art:
Sweet lady, let her pray, and sleep and dream
Alone with her good angels, far apart
From wicked men like thee. Go, go! I deem
Thou canst not surely be the same that thou didst seem."

XVII

" I will not harm her, by all saints I swear,"
Quoth Porphyro: " O may I ne'er find grace
When my weak voice shall whisper its last prayer,
If one of her soft ringlets I displace,
Or look with ruffian passion in her face:
Good Angela, believe me by these tears;
Or I will, even in a moment's space,
Awake, with horrid shout, my foemen's ears,
And beard them, though they be more fanged than wolves and bears."

XVIII

" Ah! why wilt thou affright a feeble soul?
A poor, weak, palsy-stricken, churchyard thing,
Whose passing-bell may ere the midnight toll;
Whose prayers for thee, each morn and evening,
Were never missed." Thus plaining, doth she bring
A gentler speech from burning Porphyro,
So woful, and of such deep sorrowing,
That Angela gives promise she will do
Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal or woe.

XIX

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,
Even to Madeline's chamber, and there hide
Him in a closet, of such privacy
That he might see her beauty unespied,
And win perhaps that night a peerless bride,
While legioned fairies paced the coverlet,
And pale enchantment held her sleepy-eyed.
Never on such a night have lovers met,
Since Merlin paid his Demon all the monstrous debt.

XX

" It shall be as thou wishest," said the Dame:
" All cates and dainties shall be storèd there

Quickly on this feast-night: by the tambour frame
Her own lute thou wilt see: no time to spare,
For I am slow and feeble, and scarce dare
On such a catering trust my dizzy head.
Wait here, my child, with patience; kneel in prayer
The while: Ah! thou must needs the lady wed,
Or may I never leave my grave among the dead."

XXI

So saying she hobbled off with busy fear.
The lover's endless minutes slowly passed;
The dame returned, and whispered in his ear
To follow her, with agèd eyes aghast
From fright of dim espial. Safe at last,
Through many a dusky gallery, they gain
The maiden's chamber, silken, hushed, and chaste:
Where Porphyro took covert, pleased amain.
His poor guide hurried back with agues in her brain.

XXII

Her falt'ring hand upon the balustrade,
Old Angela was feeling for the stair,
When Madeline, St. Agnes' charmèd maid,
Rose, like a missioned spirit, unaware:
With silver taper's light, and pious care,
She turned, and down the agèd gossip led
To a safe level matting. Now prepare,
Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed;
She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove frayed and fled.

XXIII

Out went the taper as she hurried in;
Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died:
She closed the door, she panted, all akin
To spirits of the air, and visions wide:
No uttered syllable, or woe betide!
But to her heart her heart was voluble,

Paining with eloquence her balmy side;
As though a tongueless nightingale should swell
Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in her dell.

XXIV

A casement high and triple-arched there was,
All garlanded with carven imag'ries
Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,
And diamonded with panes of quaint device,
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
As are the tiger-moth's deep-damasked wings;
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
A shielded scutcheon blushed with blood of queens and kings.

XXV

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,
As down she knelt for Heaven's grace and boon;
Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,
And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
She seemed a splendid angel, newly drest,
Save wings, for heaven: — Porphyro grew faint:
She knelt so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.

XXVI

Anon his heart revives: her vespers done,
Of all its wreathèd pearls her hair she frees,
Unclasps her warmèd jewels one by one,
Loosens her fragrant bodice; by degrees
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees:
Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,
Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,
In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,
But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

XXVII

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,
In sort of wakeful swoon, perplexed she lay,
Until the poppied warmth of sleep oppressed
Her soothèd limbs, and soul fatigued away;
Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day,
Blissfully havened both from joy and pain,
Clasped like a missal where swart Paynims pray,
Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.

XXVIII

Stolen to this paradise, and so entranced,
Porphyro gazed upon her empty dress,
And listened to her breathing, if it chanced
To wake into a slumberous tenderness;
Which when he heard, that minute did he bless,
And breathed himself: then from the closet crept,
Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness,
And over the hushed carpet, silent, stept,
And 'tween the curtains peeped, where, lo! — how fast she slept.

XXIX

Then by the bed-side, where the faded moon
Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set
A table, and, half anguished, threw thereon
A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet: —
O for some drowsy Morphean amulet!
The boisterous, midnight, festive clarion,
The kettle-drum, and far-heard clarinet,
Affray his ears, though but in dying tone: —
The hall-door shuts again, and all the noise is gone.

XXX

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,
In blanchèd linen, smooth, and lavendered,

While he from forth the closet brought a heap
Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd,
With jellies soother than the creamy curd,
And lucent syrops, tinct with cinnamon,
Manna and dates, in argosy transferred
From Fez, and spicèd dainties, every one,
From silken Samarcand to cedared Lebanon.

XXXI

These delicates he heaped with glowing hand
On golden dishes and in baskets bright
Of wreathèd silver: sumptuous they stand
In the retirèd quiet of the night,
Filling the chilly room with perfume light. —
"And now, my love, my seraph fair, awake!
Thou art my heaven, and I thine eremite:
Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes' sake,
Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul doth ache."

XXXII

Thus whispering, his warm, unnervèd arm
Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her dream
By the dusk curtains: — 'twas a midnight charm
Impossible to melt as icèd stream:
The lustrous salvers in the moonlight gleam;
Broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies:
It seemed he never, never could redeem
From such a steadfast spell his lady's eyes;
So mused awhile, entoiled in woofèd phantasies.

XXXIII

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute, —
Tumultuous, — and, in chords that tenderest be
He played an ancient ditty, long since mute,
In Provence called "La belle dame sans mercy:"
Close to her ear touching the melody; —
Wherewith disturbed, she uttered a soft moan:

He ceased — she panted quick — and suddenly
Her blue affrayèd eyes wide open shone:
Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-sculptured stone.

XXXIV

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,
Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep:
There was a painful change, that nigh expelled
The blisses of her dream so pure and deep;
At which fair Madeline began to weep,
And moan forth witless words with many a sigh;
While still her gaze on Porphyro would keep;
Who knelt, with joinèd hands and piteous eye,
Fearing to move or speak, she looked so dreamingly.

XXXV

"Ah, Porphyro!" she said, "but even now
Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,
Made tuneable with every sweetest vow;
And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear:
How changed thou art! how pallid, chill, and drear!
Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,
Those looks immortal, those complainings dear!
Oh leave me not in this eternal woe,
For if thou diest, my Love, I know not where to go."

XXXVI

Beyond a mortal man impassioned far
At these voluptuous accents, he arose,
Ethereal, flushed, and like a throbbing star
Seen mid the sapphire heaven's deep repose;
Into her dream he melted, as the rose
Blendeth its odor with the violet, —
Solution sweet: meantime the frost-wind blows
Like Love's alarum pattering the sharp sleet
Against the window-panes; St. Agnes' moon hath set.

XXXVII

'Tis dark: quick pattereth the flaw-blown sleet:
"This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline!"
'Tis dark: the icèd gusts still rave and beat:
"No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine!
Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine. —
Cruel! what traitor could thee hither bring?
I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine,
Though thou forsakest a deceivèd thing —
A dove forlorn and lost with sick unprunèd wing."

XXXVIII

"My Madeline! sweet dreamer! lovely bride!
Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest?
Thy beauty's shield, heart-shaped and vermeil dyed?
Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest
After so many hours of toil and quest,
A famished pilgrim, — saved by miracle.
Though I have found, I will not rob thy nest
Saving of thy sweet self; if thou think'st well
To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel.

XXXIX

"Hark! 'tis an elfin storm from faery land,
Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed:
Arise — arise! the morning is at hand; —
The bloated wassailers will never heed: —
Let us away, my love, with happy speed;
There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see, —
Drowned all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead:
Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be,
For o'er the southern moors I have a home for thee."

XL

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,
For there were sleeping dragons all around,
At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears;

Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found;
In all the house was heard no human sound.
A chain-drooped lamp was flickering by each door;
The arras, rich with horsemen, hawk, and hound,
Fluttered in the besieging wind's uproar;
And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.

XLI

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall;
Like phantoms to the iron porch they glide,
Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,
With a huge empty flagon by his side:
The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his hide,
But his sagacious eye an inmate owns:
By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide: —
The chains lie silent on the footworn stones;
The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.

XLII

And they are gone: ay, ages long ago
These lovers fled away into the storm.
That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,
And all his warrior-guests, with shade and form
Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-worm,
Were long be-nightmared. Angela the old
Died palsy-twitched, with meagre face deform;
The Beadsman, after thousand *aves* told,
For aye unsought-for slept among his ashes cold.

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

I

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethè-wards had sunk:

'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thine happiness, —
That thou, light-wingèd Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

II

O, for a draught of vintage! that hath been
Cooled a long age in the deep-delvèd earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country-green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sun-burnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stainèd mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

III

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyèd despairs,
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

IV

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,

And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
Clustered around by all her starry Fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

V

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmèd darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast fading violets covered up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

VI

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Called him soft names in many a musèd rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath,
Now more than ever seems it rich to die, —
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain —
To thy high requiem become a sod.

VII

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,

She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

VIII

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music: — Do I wake or sleep?

ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

I

Thou still unravished bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempè or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

II

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:

Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal — yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

III

Ah! happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearièd,
For ever piping songs for ever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoyed,
For ever panting, and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloyed,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

IV

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or sea shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of its folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

V

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!

When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty, — that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

I

Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

II

Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

III

I see a lily on thy brow,
With anguish moist and fever dew;
And on thy cheek a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

IV

I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful, a faery's child;
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

V

I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long;
For sideways would she lean and sing
A faery's song.

VI

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She looked at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

VII

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna dew;
And sure in language strange she said,
I love thee true.

VIII

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she gazed and sighèd deep;
And there I shut her wild sad eyes —
So kissed to sleep.

IX

And there we slumbered on the moss,
And there I dreamed, ah woe betide,
The latest dream I ever dreamed,
On the cold hill side.

X

I saw pale kings, and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
Who cried — " La belle Dame sans merci
Hath thee in thrall ! "

XI

I saw their starved lips in the gloom,
With horrid warning gapèd wide,
And I awoke, and found me here
On the cold hill side.

XII

And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake
And no birds sing. 48

SONNET

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER

Much have I travelled in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen:
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told 5
That deep-browed Homer ruled as his demesne:
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken; 10
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific — and all his men
Looked at each other with a wild surmise —
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

4. THE VICTORIAN AGE: THE ELDER POETS

It is practically impossible to condense into the limits of a brief sketch any detailed account of the Victorian age of English poetry. It is also doubtful whether an age so near us, indeed in most respects our own, so complex in its interests and so multiform in its achievements, can be made the subject of any general criticism which will stand the test of time. The Victorian era is characterized by social change and intellectual activity. Education has been vastly extended, and the power and importance of literature correspondingly increased. New problems have been constantly arising; and much of the poetry of the age has consciously or unconsciously been concerned with a solution of these problems: with fresh adjustments in society, wiser ideals in politics, a wider outlook in religion, the successive revelations of science. Hence, an earnestness of tone, a deliberative manner, a rapt seriousness, in our later poetry, rather in excess of

that which has characterized other ages. Still the Romantic tendency of poetry continues, as one critic well expresses it, "in the novelty and variety of its form, in its search after undiscovered springs of beauty and truth, in its emotional and imaginative intensity."

In poetical importance, the age as a whole takes rank as little inferior to that of Shakespeare; perhaps equal to that of Wordsworth. In its earlier period, which we have noted under three divisions (THE ELDER VICTORIAN POETS, THE POETRY OF CHIVALRY, THE COMPLETION OF THE ROMANTIC MOVEMENT), it was especially distinguished by the names of TENNYSON and BROWNING, and by the lesser glory of such poets as ARNOLD, MEREDITH, MORRIS, SWINBURNE, MRS. BROWNING, and the ROSSETTIS; but we shall first turn to one who, by his encyclopædic culture, his genial optimism and bluff acceptance of the spirit of his age, well represents the somewhat more practical aspect of this period: one who, writing in the martial style of Scott, endowed his heroes not merely with manly courage, but with manly character, with noble devotion to a righteous cause; one who may safely be called the most brilliant ballad-writer of his age. There are poets' poets and poets of the learned; but the poets of the people deserve no less to be remembered than they. For the poets of the people are also the poets of the boys — of those who are to be the fathers of the succeeding race. "If the boys of England," says Mr. Miles, and we may add "of America," "could be polled as to their favorite poet, Sir Walter Scott and Lord Macaulay would doubtless divide the honors; and if the favorite poem were in question, *Horatius* would probably be voted first."

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY (1800–1859)

Macaulay, unlike most of the other authors with whom we have been dealing, was principally a writer of prose. His work as essayist and historian so overshadows his other activities that he is ordinarily not thought of as a poet at all. It has, in fact, been the practice of many critics to follow the lead of Matthew Arnold in treating Macaulay's verse with something very much like contempt. However, as Saintsbury and others have justly replied, those who fail to see the true poetic quality in this vigorous and eloquent verse only prove the limitations in the range of their own poetic sympathies. Macaulay's poems are not addressed to the ear of the critic, although their vivid pictures and stirring metrical form ought to place them above even the critic's censure. They do not aim to expound the deeper

significance of life, or its subtler emotions; but to express in language bravely unadorned but wondrously effective the nobler passions of the simple soul. They are gloriously popular, and have moved the hearts and fired the imaginations of many readers for whom Keats or Browning or even Milton would have little message. The volume of Macaulay's poetry was very slight: a few early pieces, for the most part little known; several martial poems such as *Ivry*, *The Battle of Naseby*, and *The Armada*, also of this early period; and, finally, the famous ballads of 1842, — *Horatius*, *The Battle of Lake Regillus*, *Virginia*, and *The Prophecy of Capys*, — together known as the *Lays of Ancient Rome*. Macaulay's life is not intimately associated with the history of poetry, but it is one of the most interesting and inspiring in the roll of English men of letters.

1800–1825. — Born in Leicestershire, October, 1800, Macaulay was the eldest of nine children. His parents were people of education and refinement: the mother of Quaker descent, the father a rigid Scotch Presbyterian and prominent abolitionist. The stories of the boy's precocity are something marvellous. It is said that at the age of three he was "an incessant reader." Before he was eight "he was an historian and a poet." By the time he was fifteen he could read in at least six languages. His memory was no less wonderful than his capacity for learning. His earlier education was received at home and in schools near home. He entered Trinity College, Cambridge, at the age of eighteen, and in 1824 he was made a Fellow of his college. During the earlier years of his college course he wrote two prize poems, and, in the later, a number of critical essays.

1825–1838. — In 1825 appeared Macaulay's famous essay on *Milton*, the first of a long series which he wrote for the *Edinburgh Review*. His abilities as a writer, recognized from the first, soon brought him to the attention of the Whigs; in 1830 he was given a seat in Parliament, where we soon hear of him as an active and successful advocate of the famous "Reform Bill" of 1832. In 1834 he was sent to India as a member of the Supreme Council. Here he remained nearly five years, achieving several important governmental reforms, and amassing a considerable fortune.

1838–1859. — Back in England again, he was at once elected to Parliament from Edinburgh — a position which he held, first for nine, and again later for four, years. All this time he was a contributor of critical and biographical essays to the *Edinburgh Review;* during the latter portion of it he was also employed in writing his celebrated *History of England*. In 1842 his *Lays of Ancient Rome* appeared; the

next year, a volume of his collected essays; in 1848, the first two volumes of his *History*. When he was fifty-seven years of age, he was made a peer, and chose as his title "Baron Macaulay of Rothley." Two years later he died and was buried in the Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey. In his later life he had been the recipient of many distinguished honors, both at home and abroad — honors well merited by the energetic, generous, brilliant man of letters.

The general reader may be sure of finding pleasure in almost any of Macaulay's poems, for all are simple, manly, chivalrous: the poetry of the clarion call. Among the earlier pieces, *Ivry* is probably the best; of the *Lays* the choice would seem to lie between *Virginia* and *Horatius*. The latter is included in this volume as undoubtedly the best known and most typical of the three.

HORATIUS

A LAY MADE ABOUT THE YEAR OF THE CITY CCCLX

I

Lars Porsena of Clusium
  By the Nine Gods he swore
That the great house of Tarquin
  Should suffer wrong no more.
By the Nine Gods he swore it,
  And named a trysting day,
And bade his messengers ride forth,
East and west and south and north,
  To summon his array.

II

East and west and south and north
  The messengers ride fast,
And tower and town and cottage
  Have heard the trumpet's blast.
Shame on the false Etruscan
  Who lingers in his home,
When Porsena of Clusium
  Is on the march for Rome.

III

The horsemen and the footmen
Are pouring in amain
From many a stately market-place;
From many a fruitful plain;
From many a lonely hamlet,
Which, hid by beech and pine,
Like an eagle's nest, hangs on the crest
Of purple Apennine;

IV

From lordly Volaterræ,
Where scowls the far-famed hold
Piled by the hands of giants
For godlike kings of old;
From seagirt Populonia,
Whose sentinels descry
Sardinia's snowy mountain-tops
Fringing the southern sky;

V

From the proud mart of Pisæ,
Queen of the western waves,
Where ride Massilia's triremes
Heavy with fair-haired slaves;
From where sweet Clanis wanders
Through corn and vine and flowers;
From where Cortona lifts to heaven
Her diadem of towers.

VI

Tall are the oaks whose acorns
Drop in dark Auser's rill;
Fat are the stags that champ the boughs
Of the Ciminian hill;
Beyond all streams Clitumnus
Is to the herdsman dear;

Best of all pools the fowler loves
The great Volsinian mere.

VII

But now no stroke of woodman
Is heard by Auser's rill;
No hunter tracks the stag's green path
Up the Ciminian hill;
Unwatched along Clitumnus
Grazes the milk-white steer;
Unharmed the water fowl may dip
In the Volsinian mere.

VIII

The harvests of Arretium,
This year, old men shall reap,
This year, young boys in Umbro
Shall plunge the struggling sheep;
And in the vats of Luna,
This year, the must shall foam
Round the white feet of laughing girls
Whose sires have marched to Rome.

IX

There be thirty chosen prophets,
The wisest of the land,
Who always by Lars Porsena
Both morn and evening stand:
Evening and morn the Thirty
Have turned the verses o'er,
Traced from the right on linen white
By mighty seers of yore.

X

And with one voice the Thirty
Have their glad answer given:
"Go forth, go forth, Lars Porsena;
Go forth, beloved of Heaven;

Go, and return in glory
To Clusium's royal dome;
And hang round Nurscia's altars
The golden shields of Rome."

XI

And now hath every city
Sent up her tale of men;
The foot are fourscore thousand,
The horse are thousands ten:
Before the gates of Sutrium
Is met the great array.
A proud man was Lars Porsena
Upon the trysting day.

XII

For all the Etruscan armies
Were ranged beneath his eye,
And many a banished Roman,
And many a stout ally;
And with a mighty following
To join the muster came
The Tusculan Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name.

XIII

But by the yellow Tiber
Was tumult and affright:
From all the spacious champaign
To Rome men took their flight.
A mile around the city,
The throng stopped up the ways:
A fearful sight it was to see
Through two long nights and days.

XIV

For agèd folks on crutches,
And women great with child,

And mothers sobbing over babes
That clung to them and smiled,
And sick men borne in litters
High on the necks of slaves,
And troops of sun-burned husbandmen
With reaping-hooks and staves,

XV

And droves of mules and asses
Laden with skins of wine,
And endless flocks of goats and sheep,
And endless herds of kine.
And endless trains of wagons
That creaked beneath the weight
Of corn-sacks and of household goods,
Choked every roaring gate.

XVI

Now, from the rock Tarpeian,
Could the wan burghers spy
The line of blazing villages
Red in the midnight sky.
The Fathers of the City,
They sat all night and day,
For every hour some horseman came
With tidings of dismay.

XVII

To eastward and to westward
Have spread the Tuscan bands;
Nor house, nor fence, nor dovecote
In Crustumerium stands.
Verbenna down to Ostia
Hath wasted all the plain;
Astur hath stormed Janiculum,
And the stout guards are slain.

XVIII

I wis, in all the Senate,
There was no heart so bold,
But sore it ached and fast it beat,
When that ill news was told.
Forthwith up rose the Consul,
Up rose the Fathers all;
In haste they girded up their gowns,
And hied them to the wall.

XIX

They held a council standing
Before the River-Gate;
Short time was there, ye well may guess,
For musing or debate.
Out spake the Consul roundly:
"The bridge must straight go down;
For, since Janiculum is lost,
Naught else can save the town."

XX

Just then a scout came flying,
All wild with haste and fear;
"To arms! to arms! Sir Consul:
Lars Porsena is here."
On the low hills to westward
The Consul fixed his eye,
And saw the swarthy storm of dust
Rise fast along the sky.

XXI

And nearer fast and nearer
Doth the red whirlwind come;
And louder still and still more loud,
From underneath that rolling cloud,
Is heard the trumpet's war-note proud,
The trampling, and the hum.

And plainly and more plainly
Now through the gloom appears,
Far to left and far to right,
In broken gleams of dark-blue light,
The long array of helmets bright,
The long array of spears.

XXII

And plainly and more plainly,
Above that glimmering line,
Now might ye see the banners
Of twelve fair cities shine;
But the banner of proud Clusium
Was highest of them all,
The terror of the Umbrian,
The terror of the Gaul.

XXIII

And plainly and more plainly
Now might the burghers know,
By port and vest, by horse and crest,
Each warlike Lucumo.
There Cilnius of Arretium
On his fleet roan was seen;
And Astur of the fourfold shield,
Girt with the brand none else may wield,
Tolumnius with the belt of gold,
And dark Verbenna from the hold
By reedy Thrasymene.

XXIV

Fast by the royal standard,
O'erlooking all the war,
Lars Porsena of Clusium
Sat in his ivory car.
By the right wheel rode Mamilius
Prince of the Latian name;

And by the left, false Sextus,
That wrought the deed of shame.

XXV

But when the face of Sextus
Was seen among the foes,
A yell that rent the firmament
From all the town arose.
On the house-tops was no woman
But spat towards him and hissed,
No child but screamed out curses,
And shook its little fist.

XXVI

But the Consul's brow was sad,
And the Consul's speech was low,
And darkly looked he at the wall,
And darkly at the foe.
"Their van will be upon us
Before the bridge goes down;
And if they once may win the bridge,
What hope to save the town?"

XXVII

Then out spake brave Horatius,
The Captain of the Gate:
"To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late.
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers,
And the temples of his Gods,

XXVIII

"And for the tender mother
Who dandled him to rest,
And for the wife who nurses
His baby at her breast,

And for the holy maidens
Who feed the eternal flame,
To save them from false Sextus,
That wrought the deed of shame?

XXIX

"Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul,
With all the speed ye may;
I, with two more to help me,
Will hold the foe in play.
In yon strait path a thousand
May well be stopped by three.
Now who will stand on either hand,
And keep the bridge with me?"

XXX

Then out spake Spurius Lartius;
A Ramnian proud was he:
"Lo, I will stand at thy right hand,
And keep the bridge with thee."
And out spake strong Herminius;
Of Titian blood was he:
"I will abide on thy left side,
And keep the bridge with thee."

XXXI

"Horatius," quoth the Consul,
"As thou sayest, so let it be."
And straight against that great array
Forth went the dauntless Three.
For Romans in Rome's quarrel
Spared neither land nor gold,
Nor son nor wife, nor limb nor life,
In the brave days of old.

XXXII

Then none was for a party;
Then all were for the state;

Then the great man helped the poor,
And the poor man loved the great:
Then lands were fairly portioned;
Then spoils were fairly sold:
The Romans were like brothers
In the brave days of old.

XXXIII

Now Roman is to Roman
More hateful than a foe,
And the Tribunes beard the high,
And the Fathers grind the low.
As we wax hot in faction,
In battle we wax cold:
Wherefore men fight not as they fought
In the brave days of old.

XXXIV

Now while the Three were tightening
Their harness on their backs,
The Consul was the foremost man
To take in hand an axe:
And Fathers, mixed with Commons,
Seized hatchet, bar, and crow,
And smote upon the planks above,
And loosed the props below.

XXXV

Meanwhile the Tuscan army,
Right glorious to behold,
Came flashing back the noonday light,
Rank behind rank, like surges bright
Of a broad sea of gold.
Four hundred trumpets sounded
A peal of warlike glee,
As that great host, with measured tread,
And spears advanced, and ensigns spread,

Rolled slowly towards the bridge's head,
Where stood the dauntless Three.

XXXVI

The Three stood calm and silent,
And looked upon the foes,
And a great shout of laughter
From all the vanguard rose:
And forth three chiefs came spurring
Before that deep array;
To earth they sprang, their swords they drew,
And lifted high their shields, and flew
To win the narrow way;

XXXVII

Aunus from green Tifernum,
Lord of the Hill of Vines;
And Seius, whose eight hundred slaves
Sicken in Ilva's mines;
And Picus, long to Clusium
Vassal in peace and war,
Who led to fight his Umbrian powers
From that grey crag where, girt with towers,
The fortress of Nequinum lowers
O'er the pale waves of Nar.

XXXVIII

Stout Lartius hurled down Aunus
Into the stream beneath:
Herminius struck at Seius,
And clove him to the teeth:
At Picus brave Horatius
Darted one fiery thrust;
And the proud Umbrian's gilded arms
Clashed in the bloody dust.

XXXIX

Then Ocnus of Falerii
Rushed on the Roman Three;

And Lausulus of Urgo,
The rover of the sea;
And Aruns of Volsinium,
Who slew the great wild boar,
The great wild boar that had his den
Amidst the reeds of Cosa's fen,
And wasted fields, and slaughtered men,
Along Albinia's shore.

XL

Herminius smote down Aruns:
Lartius laid Ocnus low:
Right to the heart of Lausulus
Horatius sent a blow.
"Lie there," he cried, "fell pirate!
No more, aghast and pale,
From Ostia's walls the crowd shall mark
The track of thy destroying bark.
No more Campania's hinds shall fly
To woods and caverns when they spy
Thy thrice-accursèd sail."

XLI

But now no sound of laughter
Was heard among the foes;
A wild and wrathful clamor
From all the vanguard rose.
Six spears' lengths from the entrance
Halted that deep array,
And for a space no man came forth
To win the narrow way.

XLII

But hark! the cry is Astur:
And lo! the ranks divide;
And the great Lord of Luna
Comes with his stately stride.

Upon his ample shoulders
Clangs loud the fourfold shield,
And in his hand he shakes the brand
Which none but he can wield.

XLIII

He smiled on those bold Romans
A smile serene and high;
He eyed the flinching Tuscans,
And scorn was in his eye.
Quoth he, "The she-wolf's litter
Stand savagely at bay:
But will ye dare to follow,
If Astur clears the way?"

XLIV

Then, whirling up his broadsword
With both hands to the height,
He rushed against Horatius,
And smote with all his might.
With shield and blade Horatius
Right deftly turned the blow.
The blow, though turned, came yet too nigh;
It missed his helm, but gashed his thigh:
The Tuscans raised a joyful cry
To see the red blood flow.

XLV

He reeled, and on Herminius
He leaned one breathing-space;
Then, like a wild cat mad with wounds,
Sprang right at Astur's face;
Through teeth, and skull, and helmet
So fierce a thrust he sped,
The good sword stood a hand-breadth out
Behind the Tuscan's head.

XLVI

And the great Lord of Luna
Fell at that deadly stroke,
As falls on Mount Alvernus
A thunder-smitten oak.
Far o'er the crashing forest
The giant arms lie spread;
And the pale augurs, muttering low,
Gaze on the blasted head.

XLVII

On Astur's throat Horatius
Right firmly pressed his heel,
And thrice and four times tugged amain,
Ere he wrenched out the steel.
"And see," he cried, "the welcome,
Fair guests, that waits you here!
What noble Lucumo comes next
To taste our Roman cheer?"

XLVIII

But at his haughty challenge
A sullen murmur ran,
Mingled of wrath, and shame, and dread,
Along that glittering van.
There lacked not men of prowess,
Nor men of lordly race;
For all Etruria's noblest
Were round the fatal place.

XLIX

But all Etruria's noblest
Felt their hearts sink to see
On the earth the bloody corpses,
In the path the dauntless Three:
And, from the ghastly entrance
Where those bold Romans stood,

All shrank, like boys who unaware,
Ranging the woods to start a hare,
Come to the mouth of the dark lair
Where, growling low, a fierce old bear
Lies amidst bones and blood.

L

Was none who would be foremost
To lead such dire attack:
But those behind cried "Forward!"
And those before cried "Back!"
And backward now and forward
Wavers the deep array;
And on the tossing sea of steel,
To and fro the standards reel;
And the victorious trumpet-peal
Dies fitfully away.

LI

Yet one man for one moment
Stood out before the crowd;
Well known was he to all the Three,
And they gave him greeting loud, —
"Now welcome, welcome, Sextus!
Now welcome to thy home!
Why dost thou stay, and turn away?
Here lies the road to Rome."

LII

Thrice looked he at the city;
Thrice looked he at the dead;
And thrice came on in fury,
And thrice turned back in dread:
And, white with fear and hatred,
Scowled at the narrow way,
Where, wallowing in a pool of blood,
The bravest Tuscans lay.

LIII

But meanwhile axe and lever
Have manfully been plied;
And now the bridge hangs tottering
Above the boiling tide.
"Come back, come back, Horatius!"
Loud cried the Fathers all;
"Back, Lartius! back, Herminius!
Back, ere the ruin fall!"

LIV

Back darted Spurius Lartius;
Herminius darted back:
And, as they passed, beneath their feet
They felt the timbers crack.
But when they turned their faces,
And on the farther shore
Saw brave Horatius stand alone,
They would have crossed once more.

LV

But with a crash like thunder
Fell every loosened beam,
And, like a dam, the mighty wreck
Lay right athwart the stream.
And a long shout of triumph
Rose from the walls of Rome,
As to the highest turret-tops
Was splashed the yellow foam.

LVI

And, like a horse unbroken
When first he feels the rein,
The furious river struggled hard,
And tossed his tawny mane,
And burst the curb, and bounded,
Rejoicing to be free,

And, whirling down, in fierce career,
Battlement, and plank, and pier,
Rushed headlong to the sea.

LVII

Alone stood brave Horatius,
But constant still in mind, —
Thrice thirty thousand foes before,
And the broad flood behind.
"Down with him!" cried false Sextus,
With a smile on his pale face.
"Now yield thee," cried Lars Porsena,
"Now yield thee to our grace."

LVIII

Round turned he, as not deigning
Those craven ranks to see;
Naught spake he to Lars Porsena,
To Sextus naught spake he;
But he saw on Palatinus
The white porch of his home;
And he spake to the noble river
That rolls by the towers of Rome:

LIX

"Oh, Tiber! father Tiber!
To whom the Romans pray,
A Roman's life, a Roman's arms,
Take thou in charge this day!"
So he spake, and speaking sheathed
The good sword by his side,
And with his harness on his back,
Plunged headlong in the tide.

LX

No sound of joy or sorrow
Was heard from either bank;

But friends and foes in dumb surprise,
With parted lips and straining eyes,
  Stood gazing where he sank;
And when above the surges
  They saw his crest appear,
All Rome sent forth a rapturous cry,
And even the ranks of Tuscany
  Could scarce forbear to cheer.

LXI

But fiercely ran the current,
  Swollen high by months of rain:
And fast his blood was flowing;
  And he was sore in pain,
And heavy with his armor,
  And spent with changing blows:
And oft they thought him sinking,
  But still again he rose.

LXII

Never, I ween, did swimmer,
  In such an evil case,
Struggle through such a raging flood
  Safe to the landing place:
But his limbs were borne up bravely
  By the brave heart within,
And our good father Tiber
  Bare bravely up his chin.

LXIII

"Curse on him!" quoth false Sextus;
  "Will not the villain drown?
But for this stay, ere close of day
  We should have sacked the town!"
"Heaven help him!" quoth Lars Porsena,
  "And bring him safe to shore;
For such a gallant feat of arms
  Was never seen before."

LXIV

And now he feels the bottom;
Now on dry earth he stands;
Now round him throng the Fathers
To press his gory hands;
And now, with shouts and clapping,
And noise of weeping loud,
He enters through the River-Gate,
Borne by the joyous crowd.

LXV

They gave him of the corn-land
That was of public right,
As much as two strong oxen
Could plough from morn till night;
And they made a molten image,
And set it up on high,
And there it stands unto this day
To witness if I lie.

LXVI

It stands in the Comitium,
Plain for all folk to see,
Horatius in his harness,
Halting upon one knee:
And underneath is written,
In letters all of gold,
How valiantly he kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

LXVII

And still his name sounds stirring
Unto the men of Rome,
As the trumpet-blast that cries to them
To charge the Volscian home;
And wives still pray to Juno
For boys with hearts as bold

As his who kept the bridge so well
In the brave days of old.

LXVIII

And in the nights of winter,
When the cold north winds blow,
And the long howling of the wolves
Is heard amidst the snow;
When round the lonely cottage
Roars loud the tempest's din,
And the good logs of Algidus
Roar louder yet within;

LXIX

When the oldest cask is opened,
And the largest lamp is lit;
When the chestnuts glow in the embers,
And the kid turns on the spit;
When young and old in circle
Around the firebrands close;
When the girls are weaving baskets,
And the lads are shaping bows;

LXX

When the goodman mends his armor,
And trims his helmet's plume;
When the goodwife's shuttle merrily
Goes flashing through the loom;
With weeping and with laughter
Still is the story told,
How well Horatius kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

ALFRED TENNYSON (1809–1892)

Few poets have been so completely representative of their time, have entered so fully into its moods, or have, to such a degree, first moulded and then satisfied the tastes of their contemporaries as Alfred Tenny-

son. If the rank of a poet depends upon the diverse nature of his poetic accomplishment, or his recognition of the public need and a universal acceptance by his auditors, or an entire devotion to his art, or a lofty conception of his mission, or the harmony and effectiveness of his performance — then Tennyson's place among English poets must be very high. He was, in the fullest and best sense of the word, a scholar, delighting to live in seclusion and in communion with nature and his books. He not only thoroughly knew his own age, but also knew, as few others have known, the history and best traditions of the literature that preceded him. He has been called the poet of art rather than of energy. His technical skill is equal to Pope's, though he is as much broader than Pope as nineteenth-century poetry is broader than poetry of the eighteenth century. He has been frequently styled the literary successor of Keats, but he added to Keats's power of happily combining color, music, and sensuous form, a moral earnestness, a range of interest, a structural imagination, and a trained literary discrimination, of which the earlier poet shows little. No other English poet, not even Spenser or Wordsworth, has more conscientiously devoted himself to the cultivation of his talent. For over sixty years he was a poet pure and simple, writing, revising, studying, living for his art; and he made of himself an artist whose skill has rarely been surpassed. Few writers have so fully possessed the ability to profit by the work of their predecessors, and, at the same time, to develop so distinct an individuality. Graceful, melodious, felicitous in technique, exquisite in imagery, and noble in aspiration, he follows not far behind the very best of English poets. So quiet and retired was his life that an account of it can be scarcely more than a record of his successive publications.

1809–1832. — Tennyson was born in Lincolnshire in 1809, the fourth son in a large and highly gifted family. His father was a clergyman, a man of unusual learning and intelligence. Aside from a few rather unhappy years at school, the boy received his early education at home, where the wholesome country life and the companionship and careful training of his father did much toward insuring a sound literary development. When he was but eighteen years of age, he published with his brother Charles (then nineteen) a little volume now valuable because of its rarity, called *Poems of Two Brothers*. The same year he entered Trinity College, Cambridge. Here he gained some little note as a college poet, and made many warm and lasting friends (among them the brilliant but short-lived Arthur Hallam); but he left the university in 1831 without taking a degree, and at once devoted himself entirely to poetry. The year before leaving college

he had published *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical*, a book which was rather severely handled by the critics.

1832–1850. — Incited by these not wholly undeserved strictures, the poet, after publishing a second volume in 1832, sat quietly and diligently down to a course of self-development. He spent the next ten years chiefly in London, in the study of history, science, language, literature — anything which might discipline and mature his poetic ability. The outcome appeared in the marked distinction of the two volumes which he published in 1842 — volumes which established beyond cavil his reputation as a poet. Among these poems of 1842 were some of his best, such as the *Morte d'Arthur*, *Ulysses*, and *Locksley Hall*. In 1847 appeared *The Princess*, and in 1850, his forty-first year and the year of his marriage, *In Memoriam* was published. Begun long before upon the death of his dear friend Hallam, this is the transfiguration of sorrow by immortal hope. A few months later, upon the death of Wordsworth, Tennyson was made Poet Laureate.

1850–1875. — At the beginning of this period the poet took up his residence in the Isle of Wight, at Farringford, partly through love of the country and partly to escape from the publicity which his shy nature abhorred. After some fifteen years, when this retreat had also begun to be the Mecca of literary pilgrimages, he established a summer home at Aldworth, in Surrey. In these two country homes, surrounded by his family and congenial friends, he lived out a long, quiet, contented life, much as Wordsworth had done at Grasmere and Rydal Mount some fifty years before. All this time he was steadily at work publishing, at intervals of about five years and in the order named, *Maud*, the first four *Idylls of the King*, *Enoch Arden*, *The Holy Grail*, and other *Idylls*.

1875–1892. — In 1875 appeared the first of his three historical dramas. These are worthy of note, not so much for their intrinsic value, which is not inconsiderable, as for the interesting fact that the poet, now sixty-six years old, had the energy and ambition to enter upon an entirely new field of work, that of dramatic poetry. In fact, *Becket*, the best of his dramas, was written when Tennyson was over seventy-five years of age. But this by no means completes the tale of his work. Until the end of his life, poem after poem appeared, which, though adding nothing to his already established fame, are yet so good that we should be loath to part with one of them. Indeed, *Crossing the Bar*, the work of his eighty-first year, is one of the best things he ever wrote. In 1884 Tennyson accepted a peerage, with the title of Baron of Aldworth and Farringford — an honor which he

had previously twice declined. The poet died at Aldworth in his eighty-fourth year, October, 1892, and was buried with imposing ceremony in the Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey.

Almost everything in Tennyson is worth reading. Certainly no other English author has written so many charming and artistic short poems. A few of these are given below. His longer poems, such as *The Princess*, *Enoch Arden*, or the different *Idylls of the King*, are as entertaining and simple as they are beautiful. Two of the *Idylls* may be found in the next section of this book. *In Memoriam*, which is by many regarded as Tennyson's greatest work, is one of the noblest elegies ever written. Three things seem to insure Tennyson's popularity: he is almost always clear, he is uniformly interesting, and he is essentially modern. In the drama he did good, but not preëminent service; in the ballad and the dramatic monologue he is not easily excelled; in the lyric he has few superiors; in the idyll and the elegy he is surpassed by none.

ŒNONE

There lies a vale in Ida, lovelier
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.
The swimming vapor slopes athwart the glen,
Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to pine,
And loiters, slowly drawn. On either hand
The lawns and meadow-ledges midway down
Hang rich in flowers, and far below them roars
The long brook falling thro' the clov'n ravine
In cataract after cataract to the sea.
Behind the valley topmost Gargarus
Stands up and takes the morning: but in front
The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal
Troas and Ilion's columned citadel,
The crown of Troas.
Hither came at noon
Mournful Œnone, wandering forlorn
Of Paris, once her playmate on the hills.
Her cheek had lost the rose, and round her neck
Floated her hair or seemed to float in rest.

She, leaning on a fragment twined with vine,
Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-shade
Sloped downward to her seat from the upper cliff.

"O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,
Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
For now the noonday quiet holds the hill:
The grasshopper is silent in the grass:
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
Rests like a shadow, and the winds are dead.
The purple flower droops: the golden bee
Is lily-cradled: I alone awake.
My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love;
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are dim,
And I am all aweary of my life.

"O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,
Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
Hear me, O Earth, hear me, O Hills, O Caves
That house the cold crowned snake! O mountain brooks,
I am the daughter of a River-God,
Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all
My sorrow with my song, as yonder walls
Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed,
A cloud that gathered shape: for it may be
That, while I speak of it, a little while
My heart may wander from its deeper woe.

"O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,
Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
I waited underneath the dawning hills,
Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,
And dewy-dark aloft the mountain pine:
Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,
Leading a jet-black goat white-horned, white-hooved,
Came up from reedy Simois all alone.

"O mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
Far-off the torrent called me from the cleft:

Far up the solitary morning smote
The streaks of virgin snow. With downdropt eyes
I sat alone: white-breasted like a star
Fronting the dawn he moved; a leopard skin
Drooped from his shoulder, but his sunny hair
Clustered about his temples like a God's,
And his cheek brightened as the foam-bow brightens
When the wind blows the foam, and all my heart
Went forth to embrace him coming ere he came.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
He smiled, and opening out his milk-white palm
Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold,
That smelt ambrosially, and while I looked
And listened, the full-flowing river of speech
Came down upon my heart.

"'My own Œnone,
Beautiful browed Œnone, my own soul,
Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind ingrav'n
"For the most fair," would seem to award it thine,
As lovelier than whatever Oread haunt
The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace
Of movement, and the charm of married brows.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
He prest the blossom of his lips to mine,
And added 'This was cast upon the board,
When all the full-faced presence of the Gods
Ranged in the halls of Peleus; whereupon
Rose feud, with question unto whom 'twere due:
But light-foot Iris brought it yester-eve,
Delivering, that to me, by common voice
Elected umpire, Herè comes to-day,
Pallas and Aphroditè, claiming each
This meed of fairest. Thou, within the cave
Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest pine,
Mayst well behold them unbeheld, unheard
Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of Gods.'

" Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
It was the deep midnoon: one silvery cloud
Had lost his way between the piney sides
Of this long glen. Then to the bower they came,
Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bower,
And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,
Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,
Lotos and lilies: and a wind arose,
And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,
This way and that, in many a wild festoon
Ran riot, garlanding the gnarlèd boughs
With bunch and berry and flower thro' and thro'.

" O mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,
And o'er him flowed a golden cloud, and leaned
Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew.
Then first I heard the voice of her, to whom
Coming thro' Heaven, like a light that grows
Larger and clearer, with one mind the Gods
Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made
Proffer of royal power, ample rule
Unquestioned, overflowing revenue
Wherewith to embellish state, ' from many a vale
And river-sundered champaign clothed with corn,
Or labored mines undrainable of ore.
Honor,' she said, ' and homage, tax, and toll,
From many an inland town and haven large,
Mast-thronged beneath her shadowing citadel
In glassy bays among her tallest towers.'

" O mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
Still she spake on and still she spake of power,
' Which in all action is the end of all;
Power fitted to the season; wisdom-bred
And throned of wisdom — from all neighbor crowns
Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand
Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon from me,

From me, Heaven's Queen, Paris, to thee king-born,
A shepherd all thy life but yet king-born,
Should come most welcome, seeing men, in power,
Only, are likest gods, who have attained
Rest in a happy place and quiet seats
Above the thunder, with undying bliss
In knowledge of their own supremacy.'

" Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit
Out at arm's length, so much the thought of power
Flattered his spirit; but Pallas where she stood
Somewhat apart, her clear and barèd limbs
O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed spear
Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,
The while, above, her full and earnest eye
Over her snow-cold breast and angry cheek
Kept watch, waiting decision, made reply:

" ' Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.
Yet not for power, (power of herself
Would come uncalled for) but to live by law,
Acting the law we live by without fear;
And, because right is right, to follow right
Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence.'

" Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
Again she said: ' I woo thee not with gifts.
Sequel of guerdon could not alter me
To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am,
So shalt thou find me fairest.
Yet, indeed,
If gazing on divinity disrobed
Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair,
Unbiassed by self profit, O, rest thee sure
That I shall love thee well and cleave to thee,
So that my vigor, wedded to thy blood,

Shall strike within thy pulses, like a God's,
To push thee forward thro' a life of shocks,
Dangers, and deeds, until endurance grow
Sinewed with action, and the full-grown will,
Circled thro' all experiences, pure law,
Commeasure perfect freedom.'
" Here she ceased,
And Paris pondered, and I cried, ' O Paris,
Give it to Pallas! ' but he heard me not,
Or hearing would not hear me, woe is me!

" O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,
Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
Idalian Aphroditè beautiful,
Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian wells,
With rosy slender fingers backward drew
From her warm brows and bosom her deep hair
Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat
And shoulder: from the violets her light foot
Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded form
Between the shadows of the vine-bunches
Floated the glowing sunlights, as she moved.

" Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes,
The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh
Half-whispered in his ear, ' I promise thee
The fairest and most loving wife in Greece.'
She spoke and laughed: I shut my sight for fear:
But when I looked, Paris had raised his arm,
And I beheld great Herè's angry eyes,
As she withdrew into the golden cloud,
And I was left alone within the bower;
And from that time to this I am alone,
And I shall be alone until I die.

" Yet, mother Ida, hearken ere I die.
Fairest — why fairest wife? am I not fair?

My love hath told me so a thousand times.
Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,
When I passed by, a wild and wanton pard,
Eyed like the evening star, with playful tail
Crouched fawning in the weed. Most loving is she?
Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my arms
Were wound about thee, and my hot lips prest
Close, close to thine in that quick-falling dew
Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn rains
Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
They came, they cut away my tallest pines,
My dark tall pines, that plumed the craggy ledge
High over the blue gorge, and all between
The snowy peak and snow-white cataract
Fostered the callow eaglet — from beneath
Whose thick mysterious boughs in the dark morn
The panther's roar came muffled, while I sat
Low in the valley. Never, never more
Shall lone Œnone see the morning mist
Sweep thro' them; never see them overlaid
With narrow moon-lit slits of silver cloud,
Between the loud stream and the trembling stars.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I wish that somewhere in the ruined folds,
Among the fragments tumbled from the glens,
Or the dry thickets, I could meet with her,
The Abominable, that uninvited came
Into the fair Peleïan banquet-hall
And cast the golden fruit upon the board,
And bred this change; that I might speak my mind,
And tell her to her face how much I hate
Her presence, hated both of Gods and men.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
Hath he not sworn his love a thousand times,
In this green valley, under this green hill,

Ev'n on this hand, and sitting on this stone?
Sealed it with kisses? watered it with tears?
O happy tears, and how unlike to these!
O happy Heaven, how canst thou see my face?
O happy earth, how canst thou bear my weight?
O death, death, death, thou ever-floating cloud,
There are enough unhappy on this earth;
Pass by the happy souls, that love to live:
I pray thee, pass before my light of life,
And shadow all my soul, that I may die.
Thou weighest heavy on the heart within,
Weigh heavy on my eyelids: let me die.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts
Do shape themselves within me, more and more
Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear
Dead sounds at night come from the inmost hills,
Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see
My far-off doubtful purpose, as a mother
Conjectures of the features of her child
Ere it is born: her child! — a shudder comes
Across me: never child be born of me,
Unblest, to vex me with his father's eyes!

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,
Lest their shrill happy laughter come to me
Walking the cold and starless road of Death
Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love
With the Greek woman. I will rise and go
Down into Troy, and ere the stars come forth
Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she says
A fire dances before her, and a sound
Rings ever in her ears of armèd men.
What this may be I know not, but I know
That, wheresoe'er I am by night and day,
All earth and air seem only burning fire."

THE LADY OF SHALOTT

PART I

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
And thro' the field the road runs by
To many-towered Camelot;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Thro' the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river
Flowing down to Camelot.
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle imbowers
The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veiled,
Slide the heavy barges trailed
By slow horses; and unhailed
The shallop flitteth silken-sailed
Skimming down to Camelot:
But who hath seen her wave her hand?
Or at the casement seen her stand?
Or is she known in all the land,
The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly

From the river winding clearly
Down to towered Camelot:
And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers " 'Tis the fairy
Lady of Shalott."

PART II

There she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colors gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay
To look down to Camelot.
She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care hath she,
The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
Winding down to Camelot:
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-haired page in crimson clad,
Goes by to towered Camelot:
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two:
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often thro' the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights
And music, went to Camelot:
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed;
"I am half sick of shadows," said
The Lady of Shalott.

PART III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.
A red-cross knight for ever kneeled
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glittered free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily
As he rode down to Camelot:
And from his blazoned baldric slung,
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armor rung,
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewelled shone the saddle-leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burned like one burning flame together
As he rode down to Camelot.

As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glowed;
On burnished hooves his war-horse trode;
From underneath his helmet flowed
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river
He flashed into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra," by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces thro' the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She looked down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide;
The mirror cracked from side to side;
"The curse is come upon me," cried
The Lady of Shalott.

PART IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining,
Heavily the low sky raining
Over towered Camelot;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse —
Like some bold seer in a trance,

Seeing all his own mischance —
With a glassy countenance
Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loosed the chain, and down she lay;
The broad stream bore her far away,
The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right —
The leaves upon her falling light —
Thro' the noises of the night
She floated down to Camelot:
And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darkened wholly,
Turned to towered Camelot.
For ere she reached upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden-wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape she floated by,
Dead-pale between the houses high,
Silent into Camelot.
Out upon the wharfs they came
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her name,
The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer;
And they crossed themselves for fear,
All the knights at Camelot:
But Lancelot mused a little space;
He said, "She has a lovely face;
God in his mercy lend her grace,
The Lady of Shalott."

ULYSSES

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Matched with an agèd wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
Life to the lees: all times I have enjoyed
Greatly, have suffered greatly, both with those
That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Vext the dim sea: I am become a name;
For always roaming with a hungry heart,
Much have I seen and known: cities of men,
And manners, climates, councils, governments, —
Myself not least, but honored of them all;
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Gleams that untravelled world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnished, not to shine in use!
As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life
Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains: but every hour is saved

From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.
  This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle —
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
This labor, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
Of common duties, decent not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.
  There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail:
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toiled, and wrought, and thought with me —
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads — you and I are old;
Old age hath yet his honor and his toil:
Death closes all: but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.

Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

SONGS FROM THE PRINCESS

I

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
Wind of the western sea!
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
Blow him again to me;
While my little one, while my pretty one sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
Father will come to thee soon;
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
Father will come to thee soon;
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west
Under the silver moon;
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

II

The splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story;
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O, hark, O, hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O, sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river;
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow forever and forever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

III

Home they brought her warrior dead;
She nor swooned nor uttered cry.
All her maidens, watching, said,
"She must weep or she will die."

Then they praised him, soft and low,
  Called him worthy to be loved,
Truest friend and noblest foe;
  Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,
  Lightly to the warrior stept,
Took the face-cloth from the face;
  Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
  Set his child upon her knee —
Like summer tempest came her tears —
  "Sweet my child, I live for thee."

From IN MEMORIAM

PROEM

Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
  Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
  By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove;

Thine are these orbs of light and shade;
  Thou madest Life in man and brute;
  Thou madest Death; and lo, thy foot
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
  Thou madest man, he knows not why;
  He thinks he was not made to die;
And thou hast made him: thou art just.

Thou seemest human and divine,
  The highest, holiest manhood, thou.
  Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be;
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith: we cannot know,
For knowledge is of things we see;
And yet we trust it comes from thee,
A beam in darkness: let it grow.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell;
That mind and soul, according well,
May make one music as before,

But vaster. We are fools and slight;
We mock thee when we do not fear:
But help thy foolish ones to bear;
Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.

Forgive what seemed my sin in me;
What seemed my worth since I began;
For merit lives from man to man,
And not from man, O Lord, to thee.

Forgive my grief for one removed,
Thy creature, whom I found so fair.
I trust he lives in thee, and there
I find him worthier to be loved.

Forgive these wild and wandering cries,
Confusions of a wasted youth;
Forgive them where they fail in truth,
And in thy wisdom make me wise.

FLOWER IN THE CRANNIED WALL

Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower — but *if* I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

CROSSING THE BAR

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell
When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place,
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar.

ROBERT BROWNING (1812–1889)

Browning was almost an exact contemporary of Tennyson, born three years later and dying three years earlier. Like Tennyson, he was a man of upright character, deep religious earnestness, and cheerful optimism. Like Tennyson, also, he was always frank in facing

the intellectual and spiritual problems of the age. Both poets are essentially wholesome in all their writings; both are distinctively modern in thought and poetic method; both were so fortunately situated as to be able to give their undivided attention to their work; and both, for nearly sixty years, labored untiringly and devotedly toward the realization of their art and its mission. But the parallel ends here, and a divergence commences which will explain why Browning, unlike his great contemporary, has never been favored by the many, though he is intensely admired by the few.

The genius of Browning is bold, independent, and vigorous, as his personality is robust, genial, and aggressive. Of smooth and graceful verse he is capable (witness his *Saul*), and he is capable also of lucidity; but he tends rather to that which is involved in conception and forceful and rugged in utterance. His mission was not to delight or soothe, but to arouse and intellectually to awaken. His aims are strikingly original, and his method no less so. In consequence he has been condemned by many who simply do not take the trouble to understand him. As a thinker he is rapid and daring, wonderfully subtle and profound. His knowledge was broad, yet singularly recondite, — as, for instance, in relation to the music, painting, and sculpture of his beloved Italy. Unfortunately, with characteristic disregard of his reader's limitations, he had the habit of registering his thoughts just as he thought them; of jotting down allusions just as they occurred to him. The obscurity of Browning, moreover, is due not only to subtlety of thought and compression of phrase, but also, in no slight degree, to his careless style of writing. Hence the demand for Browning societies and Browning cyclopædias, and hence the disfavor in which many hold the poet.

There is little doubt that Browning was ahead of his age, and that the common knowledge and appreciation of his work will gain as time passes. Some of his lyrics are almost perfect of their kind. His dramatic monologues show a power of character analysis equalled by few since Shakespeare. In mental force and directness he reminds one of Dryden at his best. His poems rarely yield their meaning on a single reading, but those who take the pains to study them seldom fail to derive an exhilaration and uplift which few poets are capable of imparting. Much of his poetry hinges on the relation of this life to the next. God, the freedom of the individual soul, and immortality are the cardinal tenets of his faith. No English poet has coined into art a religious belief more strenuous and optimistic. Already ranked next to Tennyson in the field of nineteenth-century poetry, the day is at hand when the consensus of opinion will place him beside Tennyson: always,

of course, inferior in technique, but superior in originality of thought, in interpretative and creative power.

1812–1846. — Browning was born in London in May, 1812. His father, a clerk in the Bank of England, was a man of considerable learning, as well as taste in matters of art and literature. The boy's education was received chiefly by private instruction at home, where his father's large library afforded him excellent opportunity for study. He was attracted successively by the works of Byron, Keats, and Shelley; at a very early age he commenced making verses on his own account. Unlike almost every other Englishman of letters, he attended neither Oxford nor Cambridge. Browning's first poem, *Pauline*, was written when he was not yet twenty years of age. The poem, though crude and difficult to understand, is important as the first step toward the fulfilment of the poet's definite determination to make his poetry a study of the life of the soul. Such a study was *Paracelsus* three years later, and such *Sordello* in 1840 — both of them characteristic of their author; but the latter, especially, nay unpardonably, obscure and, in many places, even unintelligible to the average or more than average reader. Between 1840 and 1846 many of Browning's best poems were written, among them *Pippa Passes*, the *Dramatic Lyrics*, and the *Blot in the 'Scutcheon*. This series of poems made up some nine or ten small volumes, and were together known as *Bells and Pomegranates*.

1846–1861. — When Browning was thirty-four years old, he met Elizabeth Barrett, England's greatest poetess, who was then a confirmed invalid. An attachment sprang up, and, under romantic circumstances, the two were married. They slipped away to Italy and made their home in Florence until the wife's death fifteen years later. Though much of Mrs. Browning's best work was done during this period, Browning himself published but two volumes, *Christmas Eve and Easter Day*, 1850, and *Men and Women*, 1855. The latter is a collection of dramatic monologues — poems in which the speaker is supposed to address an interlocutor, whose presence, however, is only inferred from the speaker's words. In this particular form of composition Browning stands supreme.

1861–1871. — After his wife's death the poet returned to London, which was henceforth his home save for occasional periods of residence in Venice. During the first ten years of this life in London he continued to write poems of a quality not inferior to those which he had written in Italy. The *Dramatis Personæ*, in subject and treatment, reminds the reader of *Men and Women*. *The Ring and the Book*,

1869, over twice as long as either *Paradise Lost* or the *Idylls of the King*, is thought by many to be his best, as it is certainly his most ambitious, work; but though lighted by golden shafts of poetry the wood is hard at times to see for the trees, so confused, indiscriminate, and repetitious are the details. The *Balaustion's Adventure*, 1871, is noteworthy as a delightful rendering of a noble Greek tragedy.

1871–1889. — The latter portion of Browning's life was even more busily employed than his earlier years. As he grew older, his poems became, unfortunately, more and more abstruse, his style more and more obscure. We could well spare many of his later poems, although the very last, *Asolando*, written when the poet was over seventy-five years of age, contains some lyrics equal to those of his best days. Browning died at Venice in 1889, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

That much of Browning's poetry is difficult cannot be denied. Still some of the poems are much easier to understand than others; and if they are read in such order as takes this into account, a comprehension of the peculiarities of their author's style is much more easily acquired. The short poems included in this volume are among the simpler of his productions. At a later period the student may well supplement them by *Pippa Passes*, *The Blot in the 'Scutcheon*, *Paracelsus*, *Fra Lippo Lippi*, *Caliban on Setebos*, *The Death in the Desert*, *Saul*, *Ferishtah's Fancies*, and many another.

SONGS FROM PIPPA PASSES

I

All service ranks the same with God:
If now, as formerly he trod
Paradise, his presence fills
Our earth, each only as God wills
Can work — God's puppets, best and worst,
Are we; there is no last nor first.

II

The year's at the spring
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hill-side's dew-pearled;

The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn:
God's in his heaven —
All's right with the world!

INCIDENT OF THE FRENCH CAMP

You know, we French stormed Ratisbon:
A mile or so away,
On a little mound, Napoleon
Stood on our storming-day;
With neck out-thrust, you fancy how,
Legs wide, arms locked behind,
As if to balance the prone brow
Oppressive with its mind.

Just as perhaps he mused, "My plans
That soar, to earth may fall,
Let once my army-leader Lannes
Waver at yonder wall," —
Out 'twixt the battery-smokes there flew
A rider, bound on bound
Full-galloping; nor bridle drew
Until he reached the mound.

Then off there flung in smiling joy
And held himself erect
By just his horse's mane, a boy:
You hardly could suspect —
(So tight he kept his lips compressed
Scarce any blood came through)
You looked twice ere you saw his breast
Was all but shot in two.

"Well," cried he, "Emperor, by God's grace
We've got you Ratisbon!
The Marshal's in the market-place,
And you'll be there anon

To see your flag-bird flap his vans
Where I, to heart's desire,
Perched him!" The chief's eye flashed; his plans
Soared up again like fire.

The chief's eye flashed; but presently
Softened itself, as sheathes
A film the mother-eagle's eye
When her bruised eaglet breathes;
"You're wounded!" "Nay," the soldier's pride
Touched to the quick, he said:
"I'm killed, Sire!" And his chief beside,
Smiling the boy fell dead.

THE PATRIOT: AN OLD STORY

It was roses, roses, all the way,
With myrtle mixed in my path like mad:
The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,
The church-spires flamed, such flags they had,
A year ago on this very day.

The air broke into a mist with bells,
The old walls rocked with the crowd and cries.
Had I said, "Good folk, mere noise repels —
But give me your sun from yonder skies!"
They had answered, "And afterward, what else?"

Alack, it was I who leaped at the sun
To give it my loving friends to keep!
Naught man could do, have I left undone:
And you see my harvest, what I reap
This very day, now a year is run.

There's nobody on the house-tops now —
Just a palsied few at the windows set;
For the best of the sight is, all allow,
At the Shambles' Gate — or, better yet,
By the very scaffold's foot, I trow.

I go in the rain, and, more than needs,
A rope cuts both my wrists behind;
And I think, by the feel, my forehead bleeds,
For they fling, whoever has a mind,
Stones at me for my year's misdeeds.

Thus I entered, and thus I go!
In triumphs people have dropped down dead.
"Paid by the world, what dost thou owe
"Me?" — God might question; now instead,
'Tis God shall repay: I am safer so.

HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD

I

Oh, to be in England
Now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brush-wood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England — now!

II

And after April, when May follows,
And the white throat builds, and all the swallows!
Hark! where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops — at the bent spray's edge —
That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!
And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower
— Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower!

HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM THE SEA

Nobly, nobly Cape Saint Vincent to the North-West died away;
Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking into Cadiz Bay;
Bluish 'mid the burning water, full in face Trafalgar lay;
In the dimmest North-East distance dawned Gibraltar grand and gray;
"Here and here did England help me: how can I help England?" — say,
Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to God to praise and pray,
While Jove's planet rises yonder, silent over Africa.

MY LAST DUCHESS

FERRARA

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf's hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will't please you sit and look at her? I said
"Fra Pandolf" by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps
Fra Pandolf chanced to say "Her mantle laps
Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat:" such stuff
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough
For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart — how shall I say? — too soon made glad,

Too easily impressed; she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
Sir, 'twas all one! My favor at her breast,
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace — all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men, — good! but thanked
Somehow — I know not how — as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech — (which I have not) — to make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,
Or there exceed the mark" — and if she let
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,
— E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose
Never to stoop. Oh, sir, she smiled, no doubt,
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll meet
The company below, then. I repeat,
The Count your master's known munificence
Is ample warrant that no just pretence
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

ANDREA DEL SARTO

CALLED "THE FAULTLESS PAINTER"

But do not let us quarrel any more,
No, my Lucrezia; bear with me for once:
Sit down and all shall happen as you wish.
You turn your face, but does it bring your heart?
I'll work then for your friend's friend, never fear,
Treat his own subject after his own way,
Fix his own time, accept too his own price,
And shut the money into this small hand
When next it takes mine. Will it? tenderly?
Oh, I'll content him, — but to-morrow, Love!
I often am much wearier than you think,
This evening more than usual, and it seems
As if — forgive now — should you let me sit
Here by the window with your hand in mine
And look a half-hour forth on Fiesole,
Both of one mind, as married people use,
Quietly, quietly the evening through,
I might get up to-morrow to my work
Cheerful and fresh as ever. Let us try.
To-morrow, how you shall be glad for this!
Your soft hand is a woman of itself,
And mine the man's bared breast she curls inside.
Don't count the time lost, neither; you must serve
For each of the five pictures we require:
It saves a model. So! keep looking so —
My serpentining beauty, rounds on rounds!
— How could you ever prick those perfect ears,
Even to put the pearl there! oh, so sweet —
My face, my moon, my everybody's moon,
Which everybody looks on and calls his,
And, I suppose, is looked on by in turn,
While she looks — no one's: very dear, no less.
You smile? why, there's my picture ready made,
There's what we painters call our harmony!

A common grayness silvers everything, —
All in a twilight, you and I alike,
— You, at the point of your first pride in me
(That's gone, you know), — but I, at every point;
My youth, my hope, my art, being all toned down
To yonder sober pleasant Fiesole.
There's the bell clinking from the chapel-top;
That length of convent-wall across the way
Holds the trees safer, huddled more inside;
The last monk leaves the garden; days decrease,
And autumn grows, autumn in everything.
Eh? the whole seems to fall into a shape
As if I saw alike my work and self
And all that I was born to be and do,
A twilight-piece. Love, we are in God's hand.
How strange now looks the life He makes us lead;
So free we seem, so fettered fast we are!
I feel He laid the fetter: let it lie!
This chamber for example — turn your head —
All that's behind us! You don't understand
Nor care to understand about my art,
But you can hear at least when people speak:
And that cartoon, the second from the door,
— It is the thing, Love! so such things should be —
Behold Madonna! — I am bold to say.
I can do with my pencil what I know,
What I see, what at bottom of my heart
I wish for, if I ever wish so deep —
Do easily, too — when I say perfectly
I do not boast, perhaps: yourself are judge
Who listened to the Legate's talk last week,
And just as much they used to say in France.
At any rate 'tis easy, all of it!
No sketches first, no studies, that's long past:
I do what many dream of all their lives,
— Dream? strive to do, and agonize to do,
And fail in doing. I could count twenty such
On twice your fingers, and not leave this town,

Who strive — you don't know how the others strive
To paint a little thing like that you smeared
Carelessly passing with your robes afloat, —
Yet do much less, so much less, Someone says,
(I know his name, no matter) — so much less!
Well, less is more, Lucrezia: I am judged.
There burns a truer light of God in them,
In their vexed beating stuffed and stopped-up brain,
Heart, or whate'er else, than goes on to prompt
This low-pulsed forthright craftsman's hand of mine.
Their works drop groundward, but themselves, I know,
Reach many a time a heaven that's shut to me,
Enter and take their place there sure enough,
Though they come back and cannot tell the world.
My works are nearer heaven, but I sit here.
The sudden blood of these men! at a word —
Praise them, it boils, or blame them, it boils too.
I, painting from myself and to myself,
Know what I do, am unmoved by men's blame
Or their praise either. Somebody remarks
Morello's outline there is wrongly traced,
His hue mistaken; what of that? or else,
Rightly traced and well ordered; what of that?
Speak as they please, what does the mountain care?
Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for? All is silver-gray,
Placid and perfect with my art: the worse!
I know both what I want and what might gain;
And yet how profitless to know, to sigh
"Had I been two, another and myself,
Our head would have o'erlooked the world —" No doubt.
Yonder's a work now, of that famous youth
The Urbinate who died five years ago.
('Tis copied, George Vasari sent it me.)
Well, I can fancy how he did it all,
Pouring his soul, with kings and popes to see,
Reaching, that heaven might so replenish him,
Above and through his art — for it gives way;

That arm is wrongly put — and there again —
A fault to pardon in the drawing's lines,
Its body, so to speak: its soul is right,
He means right — that, a child may understand.
Still, what an arm! and I could alter it:
But all the play, the insight and the stretch —
Out of me, out of me! And wherefore out?
Had you enjoined them on me, given me soul,
We might have risen to Rafael, I and you!
Nay, Love, you did give all I asked, I think —
More than I merit, yes, by many times.
But had you — oh, with the same perfect brow,
And perfect eyes, and more than perfect mouth,
And the low voice my soul hears, as a bird
The fowler's pipe, and follows to the snare —
Had you, with these the same, but brought a mind!
Some women do so. Had the mouth there urged,
"God and the glory! never care for gain.
The present by the future, what is that?
Live for fame, side by side with Agnolo!
Rafael is waiting: up to God, all three!"
I might have done it for you. So it seems:
Perhaps not. All is as God overrules.
Beside, incentives come from the soul's self:
The rest avail not. Why do I need you?
What wife had Rafael, or has Agnolo?
In this world, who can do a thing, will not;
And who would do it, cannot, I perceive:
Yet the will's somewhat — somewhat, too, the power —
And thus we half-men struggle. At the end,
God, I conclude, compensates, punishes.
'Tis safer for me, if the award be strict,
That I am something underrated here,
Poor this long while, despised, to speak the truth.
I dared not, do you know, leave home all day,
For fear of chancing on the Paris lords.
The best is when they pass and look aside;
But they speak sometimes; I must bear it all.

Well may they speak! That Francis, that first time,
And that long festal year at Fontainebleau!
I surely then could sometimes leave the ground,
Put on the glory, Rafael's daily wear,
In that humane great monarch's golden look, —
One finger in his beard or twisted curl
Over his mouth's good mark that made the smile,
One arm about my shoulder, round my neck,
The jingle of his gold chain in my ear,
I painting proudly with his breath on me,
All his court round him, seeing with his eyes,
Such frank French eyes, and such a fire of souls
Profuse, my hand kept plying by those hearts, —
And, best of all, this, this, this face beyond,
This in the background, waiting on my work,
To crown the issue with a last reward!
A good time, was it not, my kingly days?
And had you not grown restless . . . but I know —
'Tis done and past; 'twas right, my instinct said;
Too live the life grew, golden and not gray,
And I'm the weak-eyed bat no sun should tempt
Out of the grange whose four walls make his world.
How could it end in any other way?
You called me, and I came home to your heart.
The triumph was — to have ended there; then, if
I reached it ere the triumph, what is lost?
Let my hands frame your face in your hair's gold,
You beautiful Lucrezia that are mine!
"Rafael did this, Andrea painted that;
The Roman's is the better when you pray,
But still the other's Virgin was his wife" —
Men will excuse me. I am glad to judge
Both pictures in your presence; clearer grows
My better fortune, I resolve to think.
For, do you know, Lucrezia, as God lives,
Said one day Agnolo, his very self,
To Rafael . . . I have known it all these years . . .
(When the young man was flaming out his thoughts

Upon a palace-wall for Rome to see,
Too lifted up in heart because of it)
" Friend, there's a certain sorry little scrub
Goes up and down our Florence, none cares how,
Who, were he set to plan and execute
As you are, pricked on by your popes and kings,
Would bring the sweat into that brow of yours ! "
To Rafael's ! — And indeed the arm is wrong.
I hardly dare . . . yet, only you to see,
Give the chalk here — quick, thus the line should go !
Ay, but the soul ! he's Rafael ! rub it out !
Still, all I care for, if he spoke the truth,
(What he ? why, who but Michel Agnolo ?
Do you forget already words like those ?)
If really there was such a chance, so lost, —
Is, whether you're — not grateful — but more pleased.
Well, let me think so. And you smile indeed !
This hour has been an hour ! Another smile ?
If you would sit thus by me every night
I should work better, do you comprehend ?
I mean that I should earn more, give you more.
See, it is settled dusk now ; there's a star ;
Morello's gone, the watch-lights show the wall,
The cue-owls speak the name we call them by.
Come from the window, love, — come in, at last,
Inside the melancholy little house
We built to be so gay with. God is just.
King Francis may forgive me : oft at nights
When I look up from painting, eyes tired out,
The walls become illumined, brick from brick
Distinct, instead of mortar, fierce bright gold,
That gold of his I did cement them with !
Let us but love each other. Must you go ?
That Cousin here again ? he waits outside ?
Must see you — you, and not with me ? Those loans ?
More gaming debts to pay ? you smiled for that ?
Well, let smiles buy me ! have you more to spend ?
While hand and eye and something of a heart

Are left me, work's my ware, and what's it worth?
I'll pay my fancy. Only let me sit
The gray remainder of the evening out,
Idle, you call it, and muse perfectly
How I could paint, were I but back in France,
One picture, just one more -- the Virgin's face,
Not yours this time! I want you at my side
To hear them — that is, Michel Agnolo —
Judge all I do and tell you of its worth.
Will you? To-morrow, satisfy your friend.
I take the subjects for his corridor,
Finish the portrait out of hand — there, there,
And throw him in another thing or two
If he demurs; the whole should prove enough
To pay for this same Cousin's freak. Beside,
What's better and what's all I care about,
Get you the thirteen scudi for the ruff!
Love, does that please you? Ah, but what does he,
The Cousin! what does he to please you more?

I am grown peaceful as old age to-night.
I regret little, I would change still less.
Since there my past life lies, why alter it?
The very wrong to Francis! — it is true
I took his coin, was tempted and complied,
And built this house and sinned, and all is said.
My father and my mother died of want.
Well, had I riches of my own? you see
How one gets rich! Let each one bear his lot.
They were born poor, lived poor, and poor they died:
And I have labored somewhat in my time
And not been paid profusely. Some good son
Paint my two hundred pictures — let him try!
No doubt, there's something strikes a balance. Yes,
You loved me quite enough, it seems to-night.
This must suffice me here. What would one have?
In heaven, perhaps, new chances, one more chance —
Four great walls in the New Jerusalem,

Meted on each side by the angel's reed,
For Leonard, Rafael, Agnolo, and me
To cover — the three first without a wife,
While I have mine! So — still they overcome
Because there's still Lucrezia, — as I choose.

Again the Cousin's whistle! Go, my Love.

RABBI BEN EZRA

I

Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made.
Our times are in His hand
Who saith, "A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be afraid!"

II

Not that, amassing flowers,
Youth sighed, "Which rose make ours,
Which lily leave and then as best recall?"
Not that, admiring stars,
It yearned, "Nor Jove, nor Mars;
Mine be some figured flame which blends, transcends them all!"

III

Not for such hopes and fears
Annulling youth's brief years,
Do I remonstrate; folly wide the mark!
Rather I prize the doubt
Low kinds exist without,
Finished and finite clods, untroubled by a spark.

IV

Poor vaunt of life indeed,
Were men but formed to feed

On joy, to solely seek and find and feast;
Such feasting ended, then
As sure an end to men;
Irks care the crop-full bird? Frets doubt the maw-crammed beast?

V

Rejoice we are allied
To That which doth provide
And not partake, effect and not receive!
A spark disturbs our clod;
Nearer we hold of God
Who gives, than of His tribes that take, I must believe.

VI

Then, welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!
Be our joys three-parts pain!
Strive, and hold cheap the strain;
Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe!

VII

For thence, — a paradox
Which comforts while it mocks, —
Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail:
What I aspired to be,
And was not, comforts me:
A brute I might have been, but would not sink i' the scale.

VIII

What is he but a brute
Whose flesh hath soul to suit,
Whose spirit works lest arms and legs want play?
To man, propose this test —
Thy body at its best,
How far can that project thy soul on its lone way?

IX

Yet gifts should prove their use:
I own the Past profuse
Of power each side, perfection every turn:
Eyes, ears took in their dole,
Brain treasured up the whole;
Should not the heart beat once "How good to live and learn"?

X

Not once beat "Praise be Thine!
I see the whole design,
I, who saw Power, see now Love perfect too:
Perfect I call Thy plan:
Thanks that I was a man!
Maker, remake, complete, — I trust what Thou shalt do!"

XI

For pleasant is this flesh;
Our soul, in its rose-mesh
Pulled ever to the earth, still yearns for rest:
Would we some prize might hold
To match those manifold
Possessions of the brute, — gain most, as we did best!

XII

Let us not always say,
"Spite of this flesh to-day
I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole!"
As the bird wings and sings,
Let us cry "All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps soul!"

XIII

Therefore I summon age
To grant youth's heritage,
Life's struggle having so far reached its term:
Thence shall I pass, approved
A man, for aye removed
From the developed brute; a God though in the germ.

XIV

And I shall thereupon
Take rest, ere I be gone
Once more on my adventure brave and new:
Fearless and unperplexed,
When I wage battle next,
What weapons to select, what armor to indue.

XV

Youth ended, I shall try
My gain or loss thereby;
Leave the fire-ashes, what survives is gold:
And I shall weigh the same,
Give life its praise or blame:
Young, all lay in dispute; I shall know, being old.

XVI

For note, when evening shuts,
A certain moment cuts
The deed off, calls the glory from the gray:
A whisper from the west
Shoots — "Add this to the rest,
Take it and try its worth: here dies another day."

XVII

So, still within this life,
Though lifted o'er its strife,
Let me discern, compare, pronounce at last,
"This rage was right i' the main,
That acquiescence vain:
The Future I may face now I have proved the Past."

XVIII

For more is not reserved
To man with soul just nerved
To act to-morrow what he learns to-day:
Here, work enough to watch
The Master work, and catch
Hints of the proper craft, tricks of the tool's true play.

XIX

As it was better, youth
Should strive, through acts uncouth,
Toward making, than repose on aught found made:
So, better, age, exempt
From strife, should know, than tempt
Further. Thou waitedst age: wait death, nor be afraid!

XX

Enough now, if the Right
And Good and Infinite
Be named here, as thou callest thy hand thine own,
With knowledge absolute,
Subject to no dispute
From fools that crowded youth, nor let thee feel alone.

XXI

Be there, for once and all,
Severed great minds from small,
Announced to each his station in the Past!
Was I, the world arraigned,
Were they, my soul disdained,
Right? Let age speak the truth and give us peace at last!

XXII

Now, who shall arbitrate?
Ten men love what I hate,
Shun what I follow, slight what I receive;
Ten, who in ears and eyes
Match me: we all surmise,
They this thing, and I that: whom shall my soul believe?

XXIII

Not on the vulgar mass
Called "work," must sentence pass,
Things done, that took the eye and had the price;
O'er which, from level stand,
The low world laid its hand,
Found straightway to its mind, could value in a trice:

XXIV

But all, the world's coarse thumb
And finger failed to plumb,
So passed in making up the main account;
All instincts immature,
All purposes unsure,
That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's amount:

XXV

Thoughts hardly to be packed
Into a narrow act,
Fancies that broke through language and escaped;
All I could never be,
All, men ignored in me,
This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped.

XXVI

Ay, note that Potter's wheel,
That metaphor! and feel
Why time spins fast, why passive lies our clay, —
Thou, to whom fools propound,
When the wine makes its round,
"Since life fleets, all is change; the Past gone, seize to-day!"

XXVII

Fool! All that is, at all,
Lasts ever, past recall;
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure:
What entered into thee,
That was, is, and shall be:
Time's wheel runs back or stops: Potter and clay endure.

XXVIII

He fixed thee mid this dance
Of plastic circumstance,
This Present, thou, forsooth, wouldst fain arrest:
Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent,
Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed.

XXIX

What though the earlier grooves,
Which ran the laughing loves
Around thy base, no longer pause and press?
What though, about thy rim,
Skull-things in order grim
Grow out, in graver mood, obey the sterner stress?

XXX

Look not thou down but up!
To uses of a cup,
The festal board, lamp's flash and trumpet's peal,
The new wine's foaming flow,
The Master's lips aglow!
Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what needst thou with earth's wheel?

XXXI

But I need, now as then,
Thee, God, who mouldest men;
And since, not even while the whirl was worst,
Did I — to the wheel of life
With shapes and colors rife,
Bound dizzily — mistake my end, to slake Thy thirst:

XXXII

So, take and use Thy work:
Amend what flaws may lurk,
What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past the aim!
My times be in Thy hand!
Perfect the cup as planned!
Let age approve of youth, and death complete the same!

PROSPICE

Fear death? — to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place,

The power of the night, the press of the storm,
The post of the foe;
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,
Yet the strong man must go:
For the journey is done and the summit attained,
And the barriers fall,
Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,
The reward of it all.
I was ever a fighter, so — one fight more,
The best and the last!
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forebore,
And bade me creep past.
No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers
The heroes of old,
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears
Of pain, darkness and cold.
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute's at end,
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest!

EPILOGUE

(TO ASOLANDO)

At the midnight in the silence of the sleep-time,
When you set your fancies free,
Will they pass to where — by death, fools think, imprisoned —
Low he lies who once so loved you, whom you loved so,
— Pity me?

Oh to love so, be so loved, yet so mistaken!
What had I on earth to do

With the slothful, with the mawkish, the unmanly?
Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless did I drivel
— Being — who?

One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.

No, at noonday in the bustle of man's work-time
Greet the unseen with a cheer!
Bid him forward, breast and back as either should be,
"Strive and thrive!" cry "Speed, — fight on, fare ever
There as here!"

MATTHEW ARNOLD (1822–1888)

In our survey of Victorian poets we began with Macaulay, whose stirring verses are essentially "popular" and especially suited to the appreciation of the youthful and the general reader. Matthew Arnold, who could not tolerate Macaulay, sneered at what he called his "pinchbeck *Lays of Ancient Rome*," and cared nothing for the ordinary reader, appeals, perhaps more than any other English poet, directly and almost exclusively to the cultivated taste of the educated class. As time goes on it seems more and more certain that Matthew Arnold is destined "to live" in the esteem of this growing and important body of readers. As to the style of his poetry, we may merely call attention to its intellectual, almost academic tone, its classic purity and restraint, its subtlety of thought and delicacy of feeling: in many respects he is the most Greek of our modern poets.

A certain prevailing note in Arnold's poetry deserves a word of discussion. Many of his poems are expressions of doubt — the earlier poems even of despair. He had little of the aggressive optimism which characterized Browning, whom he liked, and Tennyson, whom he vastly underrated. Neither had he any great

measure of that trusting faith and spiritual insight which distinguished Wordsworth — the poet of all poets whom he sincerely admired and acknowledged as his master. His was rather a dignified, sweet, and mournful questioning of Providence, attended by a calm and steady resignation to the inevitable. Though of rich scholarship and active mind, he was not a constructive artist. He was an interpreter of other minds and phases of thought rather than a seer. Yet Arnold was distinctively a modern man who looked at life and its problems from a modern point of view. And though, as we have intimated, he often doubts whether there is a satisfactory solution of these problems, it is none the less true that he everywhere insists on the necessity of an earnest, self-reliant endeavor to solve them.

Arnold devoted only the earlier years of his life to poetry; the later years were almost wholly given over to prose. Whereas his poetry seemed to be an attempt to criticise life from the point of view of the feelings, his prose was a criticism of life from the point of view of intellect. The former is therefore marked by conflict and questionings; the latter by directness and decisiveness. Accordingly, whatever may be Matthew Arnold's ultimate reputation as a poet, his prose will undoubtedly entitle him to consideration as one of the most important figures in nineteenth-century criticism.

1822–1845. — Arnold was born on Christmas Eve, 1822, at Laleham, a little town some twenty miles west of London. His father, Dr. Thomas Arnold, the famous headmaster of Rugby, was a writer of no little prominence, and one of the most honored, best loved teachers the world has ever known. Young Arnold's early education was received largely under his father's eye at Rugby; and there in his eighteenth year he won a scholarship in Balliol College, Oxford. After four years' residence at the University, he was elected to a fellowship in Oriel — a distinguished honor which had also fallen to his father some thirty years before. His scholastic attainments, both from college training and from subsequent study, were of the highest order.

1845–1857. — Shortly after obtaining his fellowship, Arnold left college. He taught Latin and Greek at Rugby for a time; then, in 1847, became private secretary to Lord Lansdowne — a position which he held for four years. In 1851 he accepted an appointment as government Inspector of Schools. To this office he devoted thirty-five years of laborious and faithful service, becoming one of England's foremost leaders in education. His first volume of verse was published in 1849, when he was twenty-six years of age. Though this little book contained several of his best poems — *The For-*

saken Merman and the *Sonnet on Shakespeare* among others — it attracted almost no attention and was soon withdrawn from circulation. Three years later a second volume appeared, with like results, though it included such excellent representation of Greek thought as the *Empedocles on Etna*. The next year a third volume was published, containing, among other new poems, *Requiescat*, *The Scholar Gypsy*, and *Sohrab and Rustum*, the last of which some critics consider the author's masterpiece. But the prose essay which preceded this third volume, and gave utterance to Arnold's theory of poetry, was the most important of his writings so far. It was the first of a long series of brilliant, critical prose works. In 1855 appeared *Balder Dead*, one of his longer and more highly polished poems. At this time, though his circle of readers was not large, his reputation as a poet was assured, and it led to his election, in 1857, to the Professorship of Poetry at Oxford.

1857–1888. — What time Arnold could spare from his duties at Oxford, which were light, and from his inspectorship, he spent in writing. His tragedy of *Merope*, "a Greek play in English dress," was published in 1858. His famous *Essays in Criticism* appeared in 1865. His volume of *New Poems*, two years later, almost the last of his poetical efforts, included *Dover Beach* and *Thyrsis*, the latter a lament called forth by the death of his friend Clough, and often reckoned among the great English elegies. For the remaining twenty years of his life, Arnold's work consisted almost entirely of prose essays in criticism, philosophy, and religion. He lectured in the United States in 1883, and again three years later, at which time he resigned the educational office he had held so long. His busy life was soon after suddenly ended by heart disease, March, 1888.

In selecting poems of Arnold for this book, we have, except in the case of *Dover Beach*, purposely avoided those which are most typical — poems of the doubtful or sceptical mood — and have chosen a few of the more attractive productions in lyrical strain.

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

Come, dear children, let us away;
Down and away below!
Now my brothers call from the bay,
Now the great winds shoreward blow
Now the salt tides seaward flow; 5

Now the wild white horses play,
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.
Children dear, let us away!
This way, this way!

Call her once before you go —
Call once yet!
In a voice that she will know:
"Margaret! Margaret!"
Children's voices should be dear
(Call once more) to a mother's ear;
Children's voices, wild with pain —
Surely she will come again!
Call her once and come away;
This way, this way!
"Mother dear, we cannot stay!
The wild white horses foam and fret."
Margaret! Margaret!

Come, dear children, come away down;
Call no more!
One last look at the white-walled town,
And the little grey church on the windy shore;
Then come down!
She will not come though you call all day;
Come away, come away!

Children dear, was it yesterday
We heard the sweet bells over the bay?
In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,
Where the salt weed sways in the stream,
Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,
Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground;
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,

Dry their mail and bask in the brine:
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye?
When did music come this way?
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away?
Once she sate with you and me,
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
And the youngest sate on her knee.
She combed its bright hair, and she tended it well,
When down swung the sound of a far-off bell.
She sighed, she looked up through the clear green sea;
She said: "I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little grey church on the shore to-day.
'Twill be Easter-time in the world — ah me!
And I lose my poor soul, Merman! here with thee."
I said: "Go up, dear heart, through the waves;
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-caves!"
She smiled, she went up through the surf in the bay.
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, were we long alone?
"The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan;
Long prayers," I said, "in the world they say;
Come!" I said; and we rose through the surf in the bay.
We went up the beach, by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-walled town;
Through the narrow paved streets, where all was still,
To the little grey church on the windy hill.
From the church came a murmur of folk at their prayers,
But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.
We climbed on the graves, on the stones worn with rains,
And we gazed up the aisle through the small leaded panes.
She sate by the pillar; we saw her clear:
"Margaret, hist! come quick, we are here!

Dear heart," I said, " we are long alone;
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."
But, ah, she gave me never a look,
For her eyes were sealed to the holy book!
Loud prays the priest; shut stands the door.
Come away, children, call no more!
Come away, come down, call no more!

Down, down, down!
Down to the depths of the sea!
She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.
Hark what she sings: " O joy, O joy,
For the humming street, and the child with its toy!
For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well;
For the wheel where I spun,
And the blessed light of the sun!"
And so she sings her fill,
Singing most joyfully,
Till the spindle drops from her hand,
And the whizzing wheel stands still.
She steals to the window, and looks at the sand,
And over the sand at the sea;
And her eyes are set in a stare;
And anon there breaks a sigh,
And anon there drops a tear,
From a sorrow-clouded eye,
And a heart sorrow-laden,
A long, long sigh;
For the cold strange eyes of a little Mermaiden
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away, children;
Come, children, come down!
The hoarse wind blows coldly;
Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door;

She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar.
We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,
A ceiling of amber,
A pavement of pearl.
Singing: "Here came a mortal,
But faithless was she!
And alone dwell for ever
The kings of the sea."

But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow,
When clear falls the moonlight,
When spring-tides are low;
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starred with broom,
And high rocks throw mildly
On the blanched sands a gloom;
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie,
Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town;
At the church on the hill-side —
And then come back down.
Singing: "There dwells a loved one,
But cruel is she!
She left lonely for ever
The kings of the sea."

TO MARGUERITE

Yes! in the sea of life enisled,
With echoing straits between us thrown,
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,
We mortal millions live *alone*.

The islands feel the enclasping flow,
And then their endless bounds they know.

But when the moon their hollows lights,
And they are swept by balms of spring,
And in their glens, on starry nights,
The nightingales divinely sing,
And lovely notes, from shore to shore,
Across the sounds and channels pour, —

Oh! then a longing like despair
Is to their farthest caverns sent;
For surely once, they feel, we were
Parts of a single continent!
Now round us spreads the watery plain:
Oh, might our marges meet again!

Who ordered that their longing's fire
Should be, as soon as kindled, cooled?
Who renders vain their deep desire?
A God, a God their severance ruled!
And bade betwixt their shores to be
The unplumbed, salt, estranging sea.

RUGBY CHAPEL

NOVEMBER, 1857

Coldly, sadly descends
The autumn evening. The field
Strewn with its dank yellow drifts
Of withered leaves, and the elms,
Fade into dimness apace,
Silent; — hardly a shout
From a few boys late at their play!
The lights come out in the street,
In the school-room windows; — but cold,
Solemn, unlighted, austere,

Through the gathering darkness, arise
The chapel-walls, in whose bound
Thou, my father! art laid.

There thou dost lie, in the gloom
Of the autumn evening. But ah!
That word, *gloom*, to my mind
Brings thee back, in the light
Of thy radiant vigor, again;
In the gloom of November we passed
Days not dark at thy side;
Seasons impaired not the ray
Of thy buoyant cheerfulness clear.
Such thou wast! and I stand
In the autumn evening, and think
Of bygone autumns with thee.

Fifteen years have gone round
Since thou arosest to tread,
In the summer-morning, the road
Of death, at a call unforeseen,
Sudden. For fifteen years,
We who till then in thy shade
Rested as under the boughs
Of a mighty oak, have endured
Sunshine and rain as we might,
Bare, unshaded, alone,
Lacking the shelter of thee.

O strong soul, by what shore
Tarriest thou now? For that force,
Surely, has not been left vain!
Somewhere, surely, afar,
In the sounding labor-house vast
Of being, is practised the strength
Zealous, beneficent, firm!

Yes, in some far-shining sphere,
Conscious or not of the past,

Still thou performest the word
Of the Spirit in whom thou dost live —
Prompt, unwearied, as here!
Still thou upraisest with zeal
The humble good from the ground,
Sternly repressest the bad!
Still, like a trumpet, dost rouse
Those who with half-open eyes
Tread the border-land dim
'Twixt vice and virtue; reviv'st,
Succorest! — this was thy work,
This was thy life upon earth.

What is the course of the life
Of mortal men on the earth? —
Most men eddy about
Here and there — eat and drink,
Chatter and love and hate,
Gather and squander, are raised
Aloft, are hurled in the dust,
Striving blindly, achieving
Nothing; and then they die —
Perish; — and no one asks
Who or what they have been,
More than he asks what waves,
In the moonlit solitudes mild
Of the midmost Ocean, have swelled,
Foamed for a moment, and gone.

And there are some, whom a thirst
Ardent, unquenchable, fires,
Not with the crowd to be spent,
Not without aim to go round
In an eddy of purposeless dust,
Effort unmeaning and vain.
Ah yes! some of us strive
Not without action to die
Fruitless, but something to snatch

From dull oblivion, nor all
Glut the devouring grave!
We, we have chosen our path —
Path to a clear purposed goal,
Path of advance! — but it leads
A long, steep journey, through sunk
Gorges, o'er mountains in snow.
Cheerful, with friends, we set forth —
Then, on the height, comes the storm.
Thunder crashes from rock
To rock, the cataracts reply,
Lightnings dazzle our eyes.
Roaring torrents have breached
The track, the stream-bed descends
In the place where the wayfarer once
Planted his footstep — the spray
Boils o'er its borders! aloft
The unseen snow-beds dislodge
Their hanging ruin; alas,
Havoc is made in our train!
Friends, who set forth at our side,
Falter, are lost in the storm.
We, we only are left!
With frowning foreheads, with lips
Sternly compressed, we strain on,
On — and at nightfall at last
Come to the end of our way,
To the lonely inn 'mid the rocks;
Where the gaunt and taciturn host
Stands on the threshold, the wind
Shaking his thin white hairs —
Holds his lantern to scan
Our storm-beat figures, and asks
Whom in our party we bring?
Whom we have left in the snow?
Sadly we answer: We bring
Only ourselves! we lost
Sight of the rest in the storm.

Hardly ourselves we fought through,
Stripped, without friends, as we are.
Friends, companions, and train,
The avalanche swept from our side.

But thou would'st not *alone*
Be saved, my father! *alone*
Conquer and come to thy goal,
Leaving the rest in the wild.
We were weary, and we
Fearful, and we in our march
Fain to drop down and to die.
Still thou turnedst, and still
Beckonedst the trembler, and still
Gavest the weary thy hand.

If, in the paths of the world,
Stones might have wounded thy feet,
Toil or dejection have tried
Thy spirit, of that we saw
Nothing — to us thou wast still
Cheerful, and helpful, and firm!
Therefore to thee it was given
Many to save with thyself;
And, at the end of thy day,
O faithful shepherd! to come,
Bringing thy sheep in thy hand.

And through thee I believe
In the noble and great who are gone;
Pure souls honored and blest
By former ages, who else —
Such, so soulless, so poor,
Is the race of men whom I see —
Seemed but a dream of the heart,
Seemed but a cry of desire.
Yes! I believe that there lived
Others like thee in the past,

Not like the men of the crowd
Who all round me to-day
Bluster or cringe, and make life
Hideous, and arid, and vile;
But souls tempered with fire,
Fervent, heroic, and good,
Helpers and friends of mankind.

Servants of God! — or sons
Shall I not call you? because
Not as servants ye knew
Your Father's innermost mind,
His, who unwillingly sees
One of his little ones lost —
Yours is the praise, if mankind
Hath not as yet in its march
Fainted, and fallen, and died!

See! In the rocks of the world
Marches the host of mankind,
A feeble, wavering line.
Where are they tending? — A God
Marshalled them, gave them their goal.
Ah, but the way is so long!
Years they have been in the wild!
Sore thirst plagues them, the rocks,
Rising all round, overawe;
Factions divide them, their host
Threatens to break, to dissolve.
— Ah, keep, keep them combined!
Else of the myriads who fill
That army, not one shall arrive;
Sole they shall stray; in the rocks
Stagger for ever in vain,
Die one by one in the waste.

Then, in such hour of need
Of your fainting, dispirited race,

Ye, like angels, appear,
Radiant with ardor divine!
Beacons of hope, ye appear!
Languor is not in your heart,
Weakness is not in your word,
Weariness not on your brow.
Ye alight in our van! at your voice,
Panic, despair, flee away.
Ye move through the ranks, recall
The stragglers, refresh the outworn,
Praise, re-inspire the brave!
Order, courage, return,
Eyes rekindling, and prayers,
Follow your steps as ye go.
Ye fill up the gaps in our files,
Strengthen the wavering line,
Stablish, continue our march,
On, to the bound of the waste,
On, to the City of God.

DOVER BEACH

The sea is calm to-night.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits; — on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanched sand,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The sea of faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

REQUIESCAT

Strew on her roses, roses,
  And never a spray of yew!
In quiet she reposes;
  Ah, would that I did so too!

Her mirth the world required;
  She bathed it in smiles of glee.
But her heart was tired, tired,
  And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,
In mazes of heat and sound,
But for peace her heart was yearning,
And now peace laps her round.

Her cabined, ample spirit,
It fluttered and failed for breath.
To-night it doth inherit
The vasty hall of death.

GEORGE MEREDITH (1828–1909)

George Meredith's novels are better known than his poems, but the latter alone would give him clear title to permanent fame. His poetic style reveals the passionate zest with which he questioned and interpreted or, as he would say, *read* life. It is intense, subtle, energetically abrupt; concentrated and vital in respect of feeling, idea, and phrase; amazingly, sensuously rich when he turns to natural beauty; vivid and sympathetic in realistic portraiture: a style all his own. His dramatic monologues are, indeed, reminiscent of Browning's method, and in both his prose and verse there is frequently a *Browningesque* obscurity, for he takes but little care to explain the sequence of his thought and is often jerky and strained in expression; but the style is essentially original.

When he writes of the truth and charm of nature or of the everyday aspects of human life without trying to philosophize too deeply — as in *Grandfather Bridgeman*, *The Beggar's Soliloquy*, *The Old Chartist*, *The Orchard and the Heath*, and the two poems included in this volume, *Juggling Jerry* and *Martin's Puzzle* — he is simple as well as inspiring. His greater poems of nature, such as *The Woods of Westermain*, *The Lark Ascending*, and *Autumn Even-Song*, are more difficult; so, too, is the beautiful *Love in the Valley*. His most ambitious poem, *Modern Love*, has passages of high imagination, philosophical depth, and isolated splendor, but is altogether too complex and disjointed to hold the interest of the general reader.

About Meredith's way of regarding nature and humanity a word should be said. He, like Browning, Tennyson, and Arnold, partook of the spiritual unrest that had been aroused by the new theory of evolution announced simultaneously in 1858 by Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace and expounded in 1859 by Darwin's epoch-making work, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*.

This work, by its implications, at least, seemed at first to upset all that religion had taught concerning the history of the earth and the creation and development of man. Browning thought that he sympathized with the new theory, but in fact he opposed it. In his view, the mind and conscience of man had always been essentially different from anything possessed by the brute creation, had always been allied to the divine, always progressing upward. He believed mightily in a personal God and in personal immortality. Tennyson studied the new theory with an open mind and was much perplexed by the scientific discoveries of the day, but he stretched hands of faith to what he felt was "Lord of all." He trusted that "somehow good will be the final goal of ill," that God cares for the individual soul, and that "not one life shall be destroyed." Arnold rejected all the miraculous element of religion and even the idea of a *personal* God. But he did believe in a Divine Providence whose existence has been proved by all human experience. He believed in the Eternal, the "enduring power, which is not ourselves," but which, we know, works in us and "makes for righteousness,"—a Power "by which all things fulfil their being." Faith, in Arnold's sense, is holding fast to this "unseen power of goodness," and immortality is not so much the persistence of individual life beyond the grave as an entering into a new and transfigured existence here and now through love and joy and service to our fellow beings. But all this that Arnold says cautiously and with an attempt not to shock our belief in a personal God, Meredith, relying upon human reason alone and the teaching of science, says openly. He "regards man as differing from the animals only in degree, not in essence," but he has high faith in a God who is revealed to human intelligence through eternal law. Reason and morals, he thinks, are gradually developed in man as a natural being, and the hope for the future lies in the progress of the race rather than in the persistence of the individual as a being endowed with immortality.

Thus, though in his poetry of nature Meredith inherits the philosophizing tradition of Wordsworth and Coleridge, his reading of earth and human life is different. And this altered view of life is not only Meredith's but also that of other poets who were his contemporaries or who followed him. To understand Swinburne, Henley, Davidson, James Stephens, Rupert Brooke, and others, and to judge their message for what it is worth, some knowledge of this view, even though one differ from it, is necessary.

1828-1851. — Meredith was of Welsh descent. He was born in Hampshire, February 12, 1828, and received part of his early educa-

tion in Germany. He entered upon the study of the law but turned at an early age to literature. His first volume of poems appeared in 1851, but attracted little attention. Tennyson, however, said of *Love in the Valley* that he could not get its lines out of his head.

1851–1885. — Somewhat discouraged he turned to fiction and produced in 1855 the first of a remarkable series of novels — twenty or more — which appeared to occupy him to the full for the next forty years. Among them may be mentioned as especially significant *The Egoist*, *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, *Diana of the Crossways*, and *Rhoda Fleming*. Characterized by wide observation of social and political life, minute analysis of character, and a new statement of what morality means, his novels are both true to everyday life and deeply philosophical. With their genuine humor, their witty and epigrammatic style, and their poetic quality, they are totally unlike other English novels, and there is a school of readers that regards them as the flower of fiction in the Victorian age. But their philosophical method and their highly intellectual and frequently difficult style did not commend them to many readers. Meredith's fame grew slowly. *Diana of the Crossways*, published in 1885, was his first work to catch the attention of the general public. In the meantime were published two volumes of poems, *Modern Love* (1862) and *Poems and Lyrics of the Joy of Earth* (1883).

1885–1909. — In 1887 another volume of poems appeared, *Ballads and Poems of Tragic Life*, and yet another the following year, *A Reading of Earth*, to which *A Reading of Life* (1901) was a companion volume. These and other poems are included in the 1912 edition of his collected poetical works (Charles Scribner's Sons, N. Y.). In his poems is to be found Meredith's most careful statement of his scheme of philosophy. The novels written after his sixtieth year show an increase of mannerism and a certain decrease in power. In his old age Meredith enjoyed the ever growing popularity of his works and the admiration of a wide circle of readers. In 1905 he was presented with the Order of Merit, a very distinguished decoration, and on his eightieth birthday he received in an especial address the homage and congratulations of the English literary world. A little more than one year later, May 18, 1909, he died at Box Hill, a suburb of London, where he had lived in retirement for thirty years.

JUGGLING JERRY

Pitch here the tent, while the old horse grazes:
  By the old hedge-side we'll halt a stage.
It's nigh my last above the daisies:
  My next leaf'll be man's blank page.
Yes, my old girl! and it's no use crying:
  Juggler, constable, king, must bow.
One that outjuggles all's been spying
  Long to have me, and he has me now.

We've travelled times to this old common:
  Often we've hung our pots in the gorse.
We've had a stirring life, old woman!
  You, and I, and the old grey horse.
Races, and fairs, and royal occasions,
  Found us coming to their call:
Now they'll miss us at our stations:
  There's a Juggler outjuggles all!

Up goes the lark, as if all were jolly!
  Over the duck-pond the willow shakes.
Easy to think that grieving's folly,
  When the hand's firm as driven stakes!
Ay, when we're strong, and braced, and manful,
  Life's a sweet fiddle: but we're a batch
Born to become the Great Juggler's han'ful:
  Balls he shies up, and is safe to catch.

Here's where the lads of the village cricket:
  I was a lad not wide from here:
Couldn't I whip off the bale from the wicket?
  Like an old world those days appear!
Donkey, sheep, geese and thatched ale-house —
    I know them!
  They are old friends of my halts, and seem,
Somehow, as if kind thanks I owe them:
  Juggling don't hinder the heart's esteem.

Juggling's no sin, for we must have victual:
Nature allows us to bait for the fool.
Holding one's own makes us juggle no little;
But, to increase it, hard juggling's the rule.
You that are sneering at my profession,
Haven't you juggled a vast amount?
There's the Prime Minister, in one Session
Juggles more games than my sins'll count.

I've murdered insects with mock thunder:
Conscience, for that, in men don't quail.
I've made bread from the bump of wonder:
That's my business, and there's my tale.
Fashion and rank all praised the professor:
Ay! and I've had my smile from the Queen:
Bravo, Jerry! she meant: God bless her!
Ain't this a sermon on that scene?

I've studied men from my topsy-turvy
Close, and, I reckon, rather true.
Some are fine fellows: some, right scurvy:
Most, a dash between the two.
But it's a woman, old girl, that makes me
Think more kindly of the race:
And it's a woman, old girl, that shakes me
When the Great Juggler I must face.

We two were married, due and legal:
Honest we've lived since we've been one.
Lord! I could then jump like an eagle:
You danced bright as a bit o' the sun.
Birds in a May-bush we were! right merry!
Joy was the heart of Juggling Jerry!
Now from his old girl he's juggled away.

It's past parsons to console us:
No, nor no doctor fetch for me:
I can die without my bolus;
Two of a trade, lass, never agree!

Parson and Doctor! — don't they love rarely
Fighting the devil in other men's fields!
Stand up yourself and match him fairly:
Then see how the rascal yields!

I, lass, have lived no gipsy, flaunting
Finery while his poor helpmate grubs:
Coin I've stored, and you won't be wanting:
You sha'n't beg from the troughs and tubs.
Nobly you've stuck to me, though in his kitchen
Many a Marquis would hail you Cook!
Palaces you could have ruled and grown rich in,
But your old Jerry you never forsook.

Hand up the chirper! ripe ale winks in it;
Let's have comfort and be at peace.
Once a stout draught made me light as a linnet.
Cheer up! the Lord must have his lease.
May be — for none see in that black hollow —
It's just a place where we're held in pawn,
And, when the Great Juggler makes as to swallow,
It's just the sword-trick — I ain't quite gone.

Yonder came smells of the gorse, so nutty,
Gold-like and warm: it's the prime of May.
Better than mortar, brick, and putty,
Is God's house on a blowing day.
Lean me more up the mound; now I feel it:
All the old heath-smells! Ain't it strange?
There's the world laughing, as if to conceal it!
But He's by us, juggling the change.

I mind it well, by the sea-beach lying,
Once — it's long gone — when two gulls we beheld,
Which, as the moon got up, were flying
Down a big wave that sparked and swelled.
Crack, went a gun: one fell: the second
Wheeled round him twice, and was off for new luck:
There in the dark her white wing beckoned: —
Drop me a kiss — I'm the bird dead-struck!

MARTIN'S PUZZLE

There she goes up the street with her book in her hand,
And her, " Good morning, Martin ! " " Ay, lass, how d'ye do ? "
" Very well, thank you, Martin ! " — I can't understand !
I might just as well never have cobbled a shoe !
I can't understand it. She talks like a song ;
Her voice takes your ear like the ring of a glass ;
She seems to give gladness while limping along,
Yet sinner ne'er suffered like that little lass.

First, a fool of a boy ran her down with a cart.
Then, her fool of a father — a blacksmith by trade —
Why the deuce does he tell us it half broke his heart ?
His heart ! — where's the leg of the poor little maid !
Well, that's not enough ; they must push her downstairs,
To make her go crooked : but why count the list ?
If it's right to suppose that our human affairs
Are all ordered by heaven — there, bang goes my fist !

For if angels can look on such sights — never mind !
When you're next to blaspheming, it's best to be mum.
The parson declares that her woes weren't designed ;
But, then, with the parson it's all kingdom-come.
Lose a leg, save a soul — a convenient text ;
I call it Tea doctrine, not savoring of God.
When poor little Molly wants ' chastening,' why, next
The Archangel Michael might taste of the rod.

But, to see the poor darling go limping for miles
To read books to sick people ! — and just of an age
When girls learn the meaning of ribands and smiles !
Makes me feel like a squirrel that turns in a cage.
The more I push thinking the more I revolve :
I never get farther : — and as to her face,
It starts up when near on my puzzle I solve.
And says, " This crushed body seems such a sad case."

Not that she's for complaining: she reads to earn pence;
And from those who can't pay, simple thanks are enough.
Does she leave lamentation for chaps without sense?
Howsoever, she's made up of wonderful stuff.
Ay, the soul in her body must be a stout cord;
She sings little hymns at the close of the day,
Though she has but three fingers to lift to the Lord,
And only one leg to kneel down with to pray.

What I ask is, Why persecute such a poor dear,
If there's Law above all? Answer that if you can!
Irreligious I'm not; but I look on this sphere
As a place where a man should just think like a man.
It isn't fair dealing! But, contrariwise,
Do bullets in battle the wicked select?
Why, then it's all chance-work! And yet, in her eyes,
She holds a fixed something by which I am checked.

Yonder riband of sunshine aslope on the wall,
If you eye it a minute'll have the same look:
So kind! and so merciful! God of us all!
It's the very same lesson we get from the Book.
Then, is Life but a trial? Is that what is meant?
Some must toil, and some perish, for others below:
The injustice to each spreads a common content;
Ay! I've lost it again, for it can't be quite so.

She's the victim of fools: that seems nearer the mark.
On earth there are engines and numerous fools.
Why the Lord can permit them, we're still in the dark;
He does, and in some sort of way they're His tools.
It's a roundabout way, with respect let me add,
If Molly goes crippled that we may be taught:
But, perhaps, it's the only way, though it's so bad;
In that case we'll bow down our heads, — as we ought.

But the worst of *me* is, that when I bow my head,
I perceive a thought wriggling away in the dust,

And I follow its tracks, quite forgetful, instead
Of humble acceptance: for, question I must!
Here's a creature made carefully — carefully made!
Put together with craft, and then stamped on, and why?
The answer seems nowhere: it's discord that's played.
The sky's a blue dish! — an implacable sky! 72

Stop a moment: I seize an idea from the pit.
They tell us that discord, though discord alone,
Can be harmony when the notes properly fit:
Am I judging all things from a single false tone?
Is the Universe one immense Organ, that rolls
From devils to angels? I'm blind with the sight.
It pours such a splendor on heaps of poor souls!
I might try at kneeling with Molly to-night. 80

5. THE VICTORIAN AGE: POETRY OF CHIVALRY

Under this heading we have included three of the most delightful of modern English poems. One of them is the work of an American poet. The other two are the work of Tennyson, and form a part of the wonderful series entitled *Idylls of the King*. They are all derived from early Celtic legend, and have been preserved through British tradition and English literature for more than a thousand years. The following is a very brief account of the origin and history of the legends treated in these poems.

Sometime shortly before 1150 a Welsh priest, Geoffrey of Monmouth as he was called, put together in twelve short books of Latin prose what purported to be a history of the early kings of Britain (*Historia Regum Britanniæ*). Besides telling the stories of King Lear and of Locrine (father of the Sabrina of Milton's *Comus*), this "history" gives a long account of the more than half-legendary "King Arthur," who is fabled to have died about 550 A.D., or six hundred years before the time of Geoffrey. Geoffrey says that he derived his stories from earlier Celtic writers; he was certainly indebted to early Celtic tradition, perhaps of Brittany as well as of Wales and Ireland. This so-called *History* had scarcely been written before it was turned into French verse by a certain Geoffrey Gaimar, and in this way it passed over into France. Not more than five years elapsed before it

was retranslated and added to by Wace, another poet of the Norman-French. Thus during the latter part of the twelfth century the story was constantly enlarged and altered, in verse and in prose, by the writers of both England and the Continent. Among the additions of this period was that of Walter Map, a Welshman, who is supposed to have combined with the original Arthurian legend the legend of the Holy Grail.

So far the story had appeared only in the original Latin of Geoffrey, and in the French or Norman-French versions of his translators. But about 1205 an English priest named Layamon felt inspired to tell in his own language the story of those "who first had English land." Accordingly, from the translations of Wace and other Normans, as well as from Celtic legends and Teutonic sagas which he himself knew, he built up, in the purest of English verse, a wonderful poem of over thirty thousand lines. This poem he called the *Brut*, from the reputed founder of Britain, Brutus, great-grandson of Æneas. In this poem the original story gains numerous additions. Among these are the episodes of the founding of the Round Table and the mysteries attending the birth and the "passing" of Arthur.

From the first, "King Arthur" proved the most popular of the many romantic tales which stirred the imagination and exercised the invention of French and Norman writers in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The variations of the legend and the additions to it became almost numberless, yet, strange to say, it was nearly a hundred years after the time of Layamon before it again found its way into an English version. But this tardiness was at last more than offset by the merits of the *Morte Darthur*, written by Sir Thomas Malory about 1470 and printed some fifteen years later, — one of the hundred works which came from the press of Caxton. The book is a translation of various French legends of the Round Table and a combination of them in one "prose-poem," couched in rich and melodious English. This work of Malory is important because it preserved to the English-speaking world the stories of Arthur and his knights; it is also the finest English literary production of the fifteenth century.

Since the time of Malory many poets have made use of the Arthurian story, chief among them Tennyson, — in his splendid *Idylls of the King*. But before we begin the study of the *Idylls*, we shall turn to an American poet, who, like Tennyson, has infused into this story of early chivalry a moral force and ethical significance which had little place with early English romance or early Celtic bard. The characters of the *Idylls of the King* are set "in a rich and varied land-

scape." The action is large, the actors many. To these stirring poems *The Vision of Sir Launfal* forms both a contrast and a supplement. Though not dealing with a hero of the Round Table or with the events of King Arthur's reign, it is none the less in the truest and best sense a poem of chivalry. We shall therefore say something concerning its author, America's most representative man of letters, James Russell Lowell.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL (1819–1891)

Lowell, like Arnold, was not only poet but critic, teacher, and man of affairs. Though the American was no doubt the better balanced, the more wholesome, and the sunnier of the two, perhaps the more gifted in varied capability, the parallel between them is nevertheless striking and suggestive. Over thirty years ago and during the lifetime of both poets, Mr. Edmund Clarence Stedman, in his *Poets of America*, said: "Lowell and Arnold, poets nearly equal in years, both scholars, both original thinkers, occupy representative positions — the one in the Old England and the other in the New — which are singularly correspondent. Two things, however, are to be noted. The American has the freer hand and wider range as a poet. Humor, dialect verse, and familiar epistles come to him as naturally as his stateliest odes. Again, while both poets feel the perplexities of the time, Arnold's difficulties are the more restrictive of his poetic glow; with him the impediments are spiritual. With Lowell they are material, and to be overcome. Like Mr. Arnold, Lowell also feels the questioning spirit of our age of unrest; but his nature is too various and healthy to be depressed by it. The cloud rests more durably on Arnold. Lowell always has one refuge. Give him a touch of Mother Earth, a breath of free air, one flash of sunshine, and he is no longer a book man and a brooder; his blood runs riot with the spring; this inborn, poetic elasticity is the best gift of the gods. Faith and joy are the ascensive forces of song."

This parallel is noteworthy partly because it suggests an answer to a query with which we are very familiar, "How do the best poets of our country compare in ability and achievement with the greater poets of England?" It is unquestionably true that America has as yet produced no poetic genius who can rank with the greatest among the masters of English poetry — no Chaucer or Spenser, no Shakespeare or Milton, no Wordsworth or Tennyson. But it is no less true that our greater American poets have created a literature which is distinc-

tive and representative; measured by the very best of the second rank of English poets, their position is, to say the least, an honorable one. Matthew Arnold was a very distinguished representative of literary England. But we are safe in saying that of the many points of likeness between Arnold and Lowell there are few in which the American is not the superior.

As to his American contemporaries, Lowell outranks them chiefly in the quality of many-sidedness. His place is very high whether he be judged as scholar, diplomat, critic, humorist, writer of brilliant and luminous prose, or poet thoroughly representative of the best that American culture has yet produced. But most of all he was a splendid type of what is highest and noblest in American citizenship.

1819–1838. — James Russell Lowell was born February 22, 1819, just outside Cambridge, Massachusetts, about a mile from Harvard University. His father, Charles Lowell, was for over half a century a Congregational minister in the West Church of Boston. Lowell was born, lived, and died in a fine old country mansion called Elmwood, whose garden, meadow, spreading trees, and lilac hedges had no slight influence in arousing in the future poet a passionate love of nature. In his father's library was an excellent collection of standard literature, and there the future scholar first made acquaintance with the world of books. At the age of fifteen Lowell entered Harvard College, then an institution of only about two hundred and fifty students; after an uneventful course of four years he took his degree in 1838. But though the young collegian was strikingly indifferent to the prescribed work of his curriculum, he must in some way have given evidence of the stuff of which he was made, for his friend, Dr. Edward Everett Hale, says of him thirty years later, "The year Lowell graduated we were as sure as we are now that in him was first-rate poetical genius, and that here was to be one of the leaders of the literature of the time."

1838–1848. — After his graduation Lowell studied law and was admitted to the bar. Discovering, however, that he had little taste for the legal profession, he soon abandoned it. About this time, 1841, appeared his first literary venture — a little volume of poems entitled *A Year's Life*. A second volume, which followed three years later, marks a distinct advance in his powers. This was the year also of his marriage to Maria White, a woman of noble character, who exerted no small influence over the young poet's early work. Four years later came another series of poems, *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, the amusing *Fable for Critics*, and the first instalment of the *Biglow Papers*, which

had been for two years running anonymously in the Boston *Courier*. This clever satire was a half-indignant, half-humorous protest against the war with Mexico, and was at once recognized as unique, in fact, one of the most original poems ever written. Lowell was now thirty years of age, and had at last caught the public ear. It is with the work of 1848 that his fame as a poet really began.

1848–1877. — During 1851 and 1852 Lowell spent a year and a half in Europe with his wife, whose health was failing and who died the next year. In 1855 the poet was appointed to the professorship in Harvard College of Belles-Lettres and Modern Language and Literature, a position which Longfellow had just vacated. After another visit to Europe to fit himself more fully for his new duties, Lowell settled down in 1856 to nearly twenty years of work as a Harvard professor. At the same time that he was carrying on his college courses, he was also occupying the post of editor — first of the *Atlantic Monthly* and then of the *North American Review*. To the latter were contributed many of his prose essays, most of them on literature and literary men. From 1862 to 1866 events connected with the Civil War called forth a second series of the *Biglow Papers*, grimmer in humor and more intense in feeling than his *Biglow Papers* of eighteen years before. In 1865 the poet recited at Harvard College the noble *Commemoration Ode*, not only one of his finest poems, but also one of the finest odes ever written. Other volumes of prose and poetry appeared during the next dozen years. At the end of this period Lowell gave up his work as editor and teacher and entered upon his career as public servant.

1877–1891. — From 1877 to 1880 the poet served as United States Minister to Spain, and from 1880 to 1885 as Minister to England. By his lively intelligence and ready tact, his fairness and breadth of mind, he gained extreme popularity in both countries. His ripe scholarship and social talents commended him especially to Englishmen; no American ambassador to the court of St. James has ever been more welcome. Mr. Lowell's second wife, whom he had married in 1857, died in England in 1885. This same year a change in political administration caused him to resign his post and return to the United States. The remaining years of the poet's life were spent in lecturing and writing, and in revising and republishing his works. His health, which had hitherto been robust, began to fail; but in spite of occasional periods of intense suffering he never lost that geniality which so endeared him to his friends. We have compared Lowell to Matthew Arnold and, indeed, they were alike in many ways. But as a vivid

contrast to Arnold's philosophy of doubt we may quote a few words which Lowell wrote in a letter to a friend not long before his death: "I don't care where the notion of immortality came from. It is there, and I mean to hold it fast. There is something in the flesh that is superior to the flesh, something that can in finer moments abolish matter and pain. And it is to this we must cling." He died in August, 1891.

The Vision of Sir Launfal, written when Lowell was only twenty-nine years of age, is considered by many to stand at the high-water mark of American poetry. It is a poem especially worthy of our study, since it admirably reveals the genius of its author both as poet of nature and as poet of the philosophy of life.

THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL

PRELUDE TO PART FIRST

Over his keys the musing organist,
  Beginning doubtfully and far away,
First lets his fingers wander as they list,
  And builds a bridge from Dreamland for his lay:
Then, as the touch of his loved instrument
  Gives hope and fervor, nearer draws his theme,
First guessed by faint auroral flushes sent
  Along the wavering vista of his dream.

Not only around our infancy
Doth heaven with all its splendors lie;
Daily, with souls that cringe and plot,
We Sinais climb and know it not.

Over our manhood bend the skies;
  Against our fallen and traitor lives
The great winds utter prophecies:
  With our faint hearts the mountain strives;
Its arms outstretched, the druid wood
  Waits with its benedicite;

And to our age's drowsy blood
Still shouts the inspiring sea.

Earth gets its price for what Earth gives us;
The beggar is taxed for a corner to die in,
The priest hath his fee who comes and shrives us,
We bargain for the graves we lie in;
At the Devil's booth are all things sold,
Each ounce of dross costs its ounce of gold;
For a cap and bells our lives we pay,
Bubbles we buy with a whole soul's tasking:
'Tis heaven alone that is given away,
'Tis only God may be had for the asking;
No price is set on the lavish summer;
June may be had by the poorest comer.

And what is so rare as a day in June?
Then, if ever, come perfect days;
Then Heaven tries the earth if it be in tune,
And over it softly her warm ear lays:
Whether we look, or whether we listen,
We hear life murmur, or see it glisten;
Every clod feels a stir of might,
An instinct within it that reaches and towers,
And, groping blindly above it for light,
Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers;
The flush of life may well be seen
Thrilling back over hills and valleys;
The cowslip startles in meadows green,
The buttercup catches the sun in its chalice,
And there's never a leaf nor a blade too mean
To be some happy creature's palace;
The little bird sits at his door in the sun,
Atilt like a blossom among the leaves,
And lets his illumined being o'errun
With the deluge of summer it receives;
His mate feels the eggs beneath her wings,
And the heart in her dumb breast flutters and sings:

He sings to the wide world, and she to her nest, —
In the nice ear of Nature which song is the best?

Now is the high-tide of the year,
And whatever of life hath ebbed away
Comes flooding back with a ripply cheer,
Into every bare inlet and creek and bay;
Now the heart is so full that a drop overfills it,
We are happy now because God wills it;
No matter how barren the past may have been,
'Tis enough for us now that the leaves are green;
We sit in the warm shade and feel right well
How the sap creeps up and the blossoms swell;
We may shut our eyes, but we cannot help knowing
That skies are clear and grass is growing;
The breeze comes whispering in our ear,
That dandelions are blossoming near,
That maize has sprouted, that streams are flowing,
That the river is bluer than the sky,
That the robin is plastering his house hard by;
And if the breeze kept the good news back,
For other couriers we should not lack;
We could guess it all by yon heifer's lowing, —
And hark! how clear bold chanticleer,
Warmed with the new wine of the year,
Tells all in his lusty crowing!

Joy comes, grief goes, we know not how;
Everything is happy now,
Everything is upward striving;
'Tis as easy now for the heart to be true
As for grass to be green or skies to be blue, —
'Tis the natural way of living:
Who knows whither the clouds have fled?
In the unscarred heaven they leave no wake;
And the eyes forget the tears they have shed,
The heart forgets its sorrow and ache;
The soul partakes of the season's youth,

And the sulphurous rifts of passion and woe
Lie deep 'neath a silence pure and smooth,
Like burnt-out craters healed with snow.
What wonder if Sir Launfal now
Remembered the keeping of his vow?

PART FIRST

I

"My golden spurs now bring to me,
And bring to me my richest mail,
For to-morrow I go over land and sea
In search of the Holy Grail;
Shall never a bed for me be spread,
Nor shall a pillow be under my head,
Till I begin my vow to keep;
Here on the rushes will I sleep,
And perchance there may come a vision true
Ere day create the world anew."
Slowly Sir Launfal's eyes grew dim,
Slumber fell like a cloud on him,
And into his soul the vision flew.

II

The crows flapped over by twos and threes,
In the pool drowsed the cattle up to their knees,
The little birds sang as if it were
The one day of summer in all the year,
And the very leaves seemed to sing on the trees:
The castle alone in the landscape lay
Like an outpost of winter, dull and gray:
'Twas the proudest hall in the North Countree,
And never its gates might opened be,
Save to lord or lady of high degree;
Summer besieged it on every side,
But the churlish stone her assaults defied;
She could not scale the chilly wall,

Though around it for leagues her pavilions tall
Stretched left and right,
Over the hills and out of sight;
  Green and broad was every tent,
  And out of each a murmur went
Till the breeze fell off at night.

III

The drawbridge dropped with a surly clang,
And through the dark arch a charger sprang,
Bearing Sir Launfal, the maiden knight,
In his gilded mail, that flamed so bright
It seemed the dark castle had gathered all
Those shafts the fierce sun had shot over its wall
  In his siege of three hundred summers long,
And, binding them all in one blazing sheaf,
  Had cast them forth: so, young and strong,
And lightsome as a locust-leaf,
Sir Launfal flashed forth in his unscarred mail,
To seek in all climes for the Holy Grail.

IV

It was morning on hill and stream and tree,
  And morning in the young knight's heart;
Only the castle moodily
Rebuffed the gifts of the sunshine free,
  And gloomed by itself apart;
The season brimmed all other things up
Full as the rain fills the pitcher-plant's cup.

V

As Sir Launfal made morn through the darksome gate,
  He was 'ware of a leper, crouched by the same,
Who begged with his hand and moaned as he sate;
  And a loathing over Sir Launfal came;
The sunshine went out of his soul with a thrill,
  The flesh 'neath his armor 'gan shrink and crawl,

And midway its leap his heart stood still
  Like a frozen waterfall;
For this man, so foul and bent of stature,
Rasped harshly against his dainty nature,
And seemed the one blot on the summer morn, —
So he tossed him a piece of gold in scorn.

VI

The leper raised not the gold from the dust:
" Better to me the poor man's crust,
Better the blessing of the poor,
Though I turn me empty from his door;
That is no true alms which the hand can hold;
He gives nothing but worthless gold
  Who gives from a sense of duty;
But he who gives but a slender mite,
And gives to that which is out of sight,
  That thread of the all-sustaining Beauty
Which runs through all and doth all unite, —
The hand cannot clasp the whole of his alms,
The heart outstretches its eager palms,
For a god goes with it and makes it store
To the soul that was starving in darkness before."

PRELUDE TO PART SECOND

Down swept the chill wind from the mountain peak,
  From the snow five thousand summers old;
On open wold and hill-top bleak
  It had gathered all the cold,
And whirled it like sleet on the wanderer's cheek;
It carried a shiver everywhere
From the unleafed boughs and pastures bare;
The little brook heard it and built a roof
'Neath which he could house him, winter-proof;
All night by the white stars' frosty gleams
He groined his arches and matched his beams;
Slender and clear were his crystal spars

As the lashes of light that trim the stars;
He sculptured every summer delight
In his halls and chambers out of sight;
Sometimes his tinkling waters slipt
Down through a frost-leaved forest-crypt,
Long, sparkling aisles of steel-stemmed trees
Bending to counterfeit a breeze;
Sometimes the roof no fretwork knew
But silvery mosses that downward grew;
Sometimes it was carved in sharp relief
With quaint arabesques of ice-fern leaf;
Sometimes it was simply smooth and clear
For the gladness of heaven to shine through, and here
He had caught the nodding bulrush-tops
And hung them thickly with diamond-drops,
That crystalled the beams of moon and sun,
And made a star of every one:
No mortal builder's most rare device
Could match this winter-palace of ice;
'Twas as if every image that mirrored lay
In his depths serene through the summer day,
Each fleeting shadow of earth and sky,
Lest the happy model should be lost,
Had been mimicked in fairy masonry
By the elfin builders of the frost.

Within the hall are song and laughter,
The cheeks of Christmas grow red and jolly,
And sprouting is every corbel and rafter
With lightsome green of ivy and holly;
Through the deep gulf of the chimney wide
Wallows the Yule-log's roaring tide;
The broad flame-pennons droop and flap
And belly and tug as a flag in the wind;
Like a locust shrills the imprisoned sap,
Hunted to death in its galleries blind;
And swift little troops of silent sparks,
Now pausing, now scattering away as in fear,

Go threading the soot-forest's tangled darks
  Like herds of startled deer.

But the wind without was eager and sharp,
Of Sir Launfal's gray hair it makes a harp,
  And rattles and wrings
  The icy strings,
Singing, in dreary monotone,
A Christmas carol of its own,
Whose burden still, as he might guess,
Was — " Shelterless, shelterless, shelterless ! "

The voice of the seneschal flared like a torch
As he shouted the wanderer away from the porch,
And he sat in the gateway and saw all night
  The great hall-fire, so cheery and bold,
  Through the window-slits of the castle old,
Build out its piers of ruddy light
  Against the drift of the cold.

PART SECOND

I

There was never a leaf on bush or tree,
The bare boughs rattled shudderingly;
The river was dumb and could not speak,
  For the weaver Winter its shroud had spun;
A single crow on the tree-top bleak
  From his shining feathers shed off the cold sun;
Again it was morning, but shrunk and cold,
As if her veins were sapless and old,
And she rose up decrepitly
For a last dim look at earth and sea.

II

Sir Launfal turned from his own hard gate,
For another heir in his earldom sate;

An old, bent man, worn out and frail,
He came back from seeking the Holy Grail;
Little he recked of his earldom's loss,
No more on his surcoat was blazoned the cross,
But deep in his soul the sign he wore,
The badge of the suffering and the poor.

III

Sir Launfal's raiment thin and spare
Was idle mail 'gainst the barbèd air,
For it was just at the Christmas time;
So he mused, as he sat, of a sunnier clime,
And sought for a shelter from cold and snow
In the light and warmth of long-ago;
He sees the snake-like caravan crawl
O'er the edge of the desert, black and small,
Then nearer and nearer, till, one by one,
He can count the camels in the sun,
As over the red-hot sands they pass
To where, in its slender necklace of grass,
The little spring laughed and leapt in the shade,
And with its own self like an infant played,
And waved its signal of palms.

IV

" For Christ's sweet sake, I beg an alms; " —
The happy camels may reach the spring,
But Sir Launfal sees only the grewsome thing,
The leper, lank as the rain-blanched bone,
That cowers beside him, a thing as lone
And white as the ice-isles of Northern seas
In the desolate horror of his disease.

V

And Sir Launfal said, — " I behold in thee
An image of him who died on the tree;
Thou also hast had thy crown of thorns, —
Thou also hast had the world's buffets and scorns, —

And to thy life were not denied
The wounds in the hands and feet and side:
Mild Mary's Son, acknowledge me;
Behold, through him, I give to Thee!"

VI

Then the soul of the leper stood up in his eyes
And looked at Sir Launfal, and straightway he
Remembered in what a haughtier guise
He had flung an alms to leprosie,
When he girt his young life up in gilded mail
And set forth in search of the Holy Grail.
The heart within him was ashes and dust;
He parted in twain his single crust,
He broke the ice on the streamlet's brink,
And gave the leper to eat and drink:
'Twas a mouldy crust of coarse brown bread,
'Twas water out of a wooden bowl, —
Yet with fine wheaten bread was the leper fed,
And 'twas red wine he drank with his thirsty soul.

VII

As Sir Launfal mused with a downcast face,
A light shone round about the place;
The leper no longer crouched at his side,
But stood before him glorified,
Shining and tall and fair and straight
As the pillar that stood by the Beautiful Gate, —
Himself the Gate whereby men can
Enter the temple of God in Man.

VIII

His words were shed softer than leaves from the pine,
And they fell on Sir Launfal as snows on the brine,
That mingle their softness and quiet in one
With the shaggy unrest they float down upon;
And the voice that was calmer than silence said,

"Lo it is I, be not afraid!
In many climes, without avail,
Thou hast spent thy life for the Holy Grail;
Behold, it is here, — this cup which thou
Didst fill at the streamlet for Me but now;
This crust is My body broken for thee,
This water His blood that died on the tree;
The Holy Supper is kept, indeed,
In whatso we share with another's need:
Not what we give, but what we share, —
For the gift without the giver is bare;
Who gives himself with his alms feeds three, —
Himself, his hungering neighbor, and Me."

IX

Sir Launfal awoke as from a swound: —
"The Grail in my castle here is found!
Hang my idle armor up on the wall,
Let it be the spider's banquet-hall;
He must be fenced with stronger mail
Who would seek and find the Holy Grail."

X

The castle gate stands open now,
And the wanderer is welcome to the hall
As the hangbird is to the elm-tree bough;
No longer scowl the turrets tall,
The Summer's long siege at last is o'er;
When the first poor outcast went in at the door,
She entered with him in disguise,
And mastered the fortress by surprise;
There is no spot she loves so well on ground,
She lingers and smiles there the whole year round·
The meanest serf on Sir Launfal's land
Has hall and bower at his command;
And there's no poor man in the North Countree
But is lord of the earldom as much as he.

TENNYSON'S IDYLLS OF THE KING

In Professor Maccallum's valuable book on Tennyson's *Idylls of the King and Arthurian Story* we read: "In the *Idylls* is probably to be found the finest development that the cycle of Arthurian story has yet attained, or will for long attain. Perhaps it might even be said that they deliver the classic version of that story as a whole, and present it in the highest perfection of which it is capable. It may be maintained that its peculiar merits and defects correspond so closely with the inherent limitations and excellencies of Tennyson's genius that in him it found its unique predestined interpreter."

Though Tennyson goes directly to Malory for his story, he exercises throughout the *Idylls* an artist's privilege of departing from the original whenever such departure seems to be to the advantage of his poem. The subject of the legend appealed to the poet largely on account of the moral significance which he found in it or could add to it. Not that it is at all necessary or wise to regard the whole poem as an allegory, as some critics have tried to do, with each separate character or incident standing as the symbol of some abstract truth. Such a view of the *Idylls* would detract greatly from their simple epic interest. Still, in a general way, no doubt the *motif* underlying them, as Tennyson himself has said, is to depict "Sense at war with Soul." The guilty love of Lancelot and the Queen stands out as the main thread of the plot. In every one of the *Idylls* the blighting influence of their sin is felt. The conflict between evil and good is everywhere prominent. But though the Round Table is at last dissolved, the spiritual nobility of the king towers above the littleness and evil that surround him. We feel with Dr. van Dyke, "His life is not a failure, but a glorious success; for it demonstrates the freedom of the will and the strength of the soul against the powers of evil and the fate of sin."

Tennyson's interest in the Arthurian legend is seen as early as 1832, when in *The Lady of Shalott* he developed the beautiful and pathetic theme afterward enlarged and modified into *Lancelot and Elaine*. Ten years later the *Morte d'Arthur* was published — a poem which later still, in unchanged form, appeared as the main portion of the *Passing of Arthur*, the last of the idylls. But the plan of the whole series was evidently not yet conceived; it was not till 1859 that the four idylls were published which formed the first instalment. In 1869 four more were published; afterward, at scattered intervals, still others, the last not appearing till 1885 — more than half a century after *The Lady of Shalott*.

A criticism of this group of poems is hardly needed. It easily ranks as one of the most charming series in English poetry. The exquisite character sketches, the lively human interest, the dramatic sequence of events, the heroic atmosphere, the delicate carved work peculiar to the poet's fancy, the splendid blank verse, — all contribute, with many other features of excellence, to establish for the series a position of surpassing distinction. The following is a full list of the idylls in the order in which they were finally arranged, together with the date of each:

I. The Coming of Arthur, 1869.

II. The Round Table: (1) *Gareth and Lynette*, 1872; (2) *The Marriage of Geraint*, 1859; (3) *Geraint and Enid*, 1859 ((2) and (3) were originally combined as *Enid*); (4) *Balin and Balan*, 1885; (5) *Merlin and Vivien*, 1859 (first called *Vivien*); (6) *Lancelot and Elaine*, 1859 (first called *Elaine*); (7) *The Holy Grail*, 1869; (8) *Pelleas and Ettarre*, 1869; (9) *The Last Tournament*, 1871; (10) *Guinevere*, 1859.

III. The Passing of Arthur, 1869 (mostly made up of *Morte d'Arthur*, 1842).

The Epic, as finally completed, also included a *Dedication to Prince Albert* and an *Epilogue to the Queen*. The student will hardly find poetry more interesting — nay, fascinating — than that presented in these twelve idylls. In this book we are forced to confine ourselves to two, *Lancelot and Elaine*, the sixth of the "Round Table," and *The Passing of Arthur*, the last of the series. All twelve may be found, however, in editions of Tennyson's poems; and the student will find that at least the *Gareth and Lynette*, the *Marriage of Geraint*, the *Geraint and Enid*, *The Last Tournament*, and *Guinevere* will equal in interest either of the two here given.

LANCELOT AND ELAINE

Elaine the fair, Elaine the lovable,
Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat,
High in her chamber up a tower to the east
Guarded the sacred shield of Lancelot;
Which first she placed where morning's earliest ray
Might strike it, and awake her with the gleam;
Then, fearing rust or soilure, fashioned for it
A case of silk, and braided thereupon
All the devices blazoned on the shield

In their own tinct, and added, of her wit,
A border fantasy of branch and flower,
And yellow-throated nestling in her nest.
Nor rested thus content, but day by day,
Leaving her household and good father, climbed
That eastern tower, and entering barred her door,
Stript off the case, and read the naked shield,
Now guessed a hidden meaning in his arms,
Now made a pretty history to herself
Of every dint a sword had beaten in it,
And every scratch a lance had made upon it,
Conjecturing when and where: this cut is fresh;
That ten years back; this dealt him at Caerlyle;
That at Caerleon; this at Camelot:
And ah, God's mercy, what a stroke was there!
And here a thrust that might have killed, but God
Broke the strong lance, and rolled his enemy down,
And saved him: so she lived in fantasy.

How came the lily maid by that good shield
Of Lancelot, she that knew not ev'n his name?
He left it with her, when he rode to tilt
For the great diamond in the diamond jousts,
Which Arthur had ordained, and by that name
Had named them, since a diamond was the prize.

For Arthur, long before they crowned him king,
Roving the trackless realms of Lyonnesse,
Had found a glen, gray boulder and black tarn.
A horror lived about the tarn, and clave
Like its own mists to all the mountain side:
For here two brothers, one a king, had met
And fought together; but their names were lost;
And each had slain his brother at a blow;
And down they fell and made the glen abhorred:
And there they lay till all their bones were bleached,
And lichened into color with the crags:
And he that once was king had on a crown

Of diamonds, one in front and four aside.
And Arthur came, and laboring up the pass,
All in a misty moonshine, unawares
Had trodden that crowned skeleton, and the skull
Brake from the nape, and from the skull the crown
Rolled into light, and turning on its rims
Fled like a glittering rivulet to the tarn:
And down the shingly scaur he plunged, and caught,
And set it on his head, and in his heart
Heard murmurs, "Lo, thou likewise shalt be king."

Thereafter, when a king, he had the gems
Plucked from the crown, and showed them to his knights,
Saying: "These jewels, whereupon I chanced
Divinely, are the kingdom's, not the King's —
For public use: henceforward let there be,
Once every year, a joust for one of these:
For so by nine years' proof we needs must learn
Which is our mightiest, and ourselves shall grow
In use of arms and manhood, till we drive
The heathen, who, some say, shall rule the land
Hereafter, which God hinder!" Thus he spoke:
And eight years past, eight jousts had been, and still
Had Lancelot won the diamond of the year,
With purpose to present them to the Queen
When all were won; but, meaning all at once
To snare her royal fancy with a boon
Worth half her realm, had never spoken word.

Now for the central diamond and the last
And largest, Arthur, holding then his court
Hard on the river nigh the place which now
Is this world's hugest, let proclaim a joust
At Camelot, and when the time drew nigh
Spake — for she had been sick — to Guinevere:
"Are you so sick, my Queen, you cannot move
To these fair jousts?" "Yea, lord," she said, "ye know it."
"Then will ye miss," he answered, "the great deeds
Of Lancelot, and his prowess in the lists,

A sight ye love to look on." And the Queen
Lifted her eyes, and they dwelt languidly
On Lancelot, where he stood beside the King.
He, thinking that he read her meaning there,
"Stay with me, I am sick; my love is more
Than many diamonds," yielded; and a heart
Love-loyal to the least wish of the Queen —
However much he yearned to make complete
The tale of diamonds for his destined boon —
Urged him to speak against the truth, and say,
"Sir King, mine ancient wound is hardly whole,
And lets me from the saddle;" and the King
Glanced first at him, then her, and went his way.
No sooner gone than suddenly she began:

"To blame, my lord Sir Lancelot, much to blame!
Why go ye not to these fair jousts? the knights
Are half of them our enemies, and the crowd
Will murmur, 'Lo, the shameless ones, who take
Their pastime now the trustful King is gone!'"
Then Lancelot, vext at having lied in vain:
"Are ye so wise? ye were not once so wise,
My Queen, that summer when ye loved me first.
Then of the crowd ye took no more account
Than of the myriad cricket of the mead,
When its own voice clings to each blade of grass,
And every voice is nothing. As to knights,
Them surely can I silence with all ease.
But now my loyal worship is allowed
Of all men: many a bard, without offence,
Has linked our names together in his lay,
Lancelot, the flower of bravery, Guinevere,
The pearl of beauty; and our knights at feast
Have pledged us in this union, while the King
Would listen smiling. How then? is there more?
Has Arthur spoken aught? or would yourself,
Now weary of my service and devoir,
Henceforth be truer to your faultless lord?"

She broke into a little scornful laugh:
"Arthur, my lord, Arthur, the faultless King,
That passionate perfection, my good lord —
But who can gaze upon the sun in heaven?
He never spake word of reproach to me,
He never had a glimpse of mine untruth,
He cares not for me: only here to-day
There gleamed a vague suspicion in his eyes:
Some meddling rogue has tampered with him — else
Rapt in this fancy of his Table Round,
And swearing men to vows impossible,
To make them like himself; but, friend, to me
He is all fault who hath no fault at all:
For who loves me must have a touch of earth;
The low sun makes the color: I am yours,
Nor Arthur's, as ye know, save by the bond.
And therefore hear my words: go to the jousts:
The tiny-trumpeting gnat can break our dream
When sweetest; and the vermin voices here
May buzz so loud — we scorn them, but they sting."

Then answered Lancelot, the chief of knights:
"And with what face, after my pretext made,
Shall I appear, O Queen, at Camelot, I
Before a king who honors his own word
As if it were his God's?"

"Yea," said the Queen,
"A moral child without the craft to rule,
Else had he not lost me: but listen to me,
If I must find you wit: we hear it said
That men go down before your spear at a touch,
But knowing you are Lancelot; your great name,
This conquers: hide it therefore; go unknown:
Win! by this kiss you will: and our true King
Will then allow your pretext, O my knight,
As all for glory; for to speak him true,
Ye know right well, how meek soe'er he seem,

No keener hunter after glory breathes.
He loves it in his knights more than himself;
They prove to him his work: win and return."

Then got Sir Lancelot suddenly to horse,
Wroth at himself. Not willing to be known,
He left the barren-beaten thoroughfare,
Chose the green path that showed the rarer foot,
And there among the solitary downs,
Full often lost in fancy, lost his way;
Till as he traced a faintly-shadowed track,
That all in loops and links among the dales
Ran to the Castle of Astolat, he saw
Fired from the west, far on a hill, the towers.
Thither he made, and blew the gateway horn.
Then came an old, dumb, myriad-wrinkled man,
Who let him into lodging and disarmed.
And Lancelot marvelled at the wordless man;
And issuing found the Lord of Astolat
With two strong sons, Sir Torre and Sir Lavaine,
Moving to meet him in the castle court;
And close behind them stept the lily maid
Elaine, his daughter: mother of the house
There was not. Some light jest among them rose
With laughter dying down as the great knight
Approached them; then the Lord of Astolat:
"Whence comest thou, my guest, and by what name
Livest between the lips? for by thy state
And presence I might guess thee chief of those,
After the King, who eat in Arthur's halls.
Him have I seen: the rest, his Table Round,
Known as they are, to me they are unknown."

Then answered Lancelot, the chief of knights:
"Known am I, and of Arthur's hall, and known,
What I by mere mischance have brought, my shield.
But since I go to joust as one unknown
At Camelot for the diamond, ask me not;

Hereafter ye shall know me — and the shield —
I pray you lend me one, if such you have,
Blank, or at least with some device not mine."

Then said the Lord of Astolat: "Here is Torre's:
Hurt in his first tilt was my son, Sir Torre;
And so, God wot, his shield is blank enough.
His ye can have." Then added plain Sir Torre,
"Yea, since I cannot use it, ye may have it."
Here laughed the father saying: "Fie, Sir Churl,
Is that an answer for a noble knight?
Allow him! but Lavaine, my younger here,
He is so full of lustihood, he will ride,
Joust for it, and win, and bring it in an hour,
And set it in this damsel's golden hair,
To make her thrice as wilful as before."

"Nay, father, nay, good father, shame me not
Before this noble knight," said young Lavaine,
"For nothing. Surely I but played on Torre:
He seemed so sullen, vext he could not go:
A jest, no more! for, knight, the maiden dreamt
That some one put this diamond in her hand,
And that it was too slippery to be held,
And slipt and fell into some pool or stream,
The castle-well, belike; and then I said
That *if* I went, and *if* I fought and won it —
But all was jest and joke among ourselves —
Then must she keep it safelier. All was jest.
But, father, give me leave, an if he will,
To ride to Camelot with this noble knight:
Win shall I not, but do my best to win;
Young as I am, yet would I do my best."

"So ye will grace me," answered Lancelot,
Smiling a moment, "with your fellowship
O'er these waste downs whereon I lost myself,
Then were I glad of you as guide and friend:

And you shall win this diamond, — as I hear,
It is a fair large diamond, — if ye may,
And yield it to this maiden, if ye will."
"A fair large diamond," added plain Sir Torre,
"Such be for queens, and not for simple maids."
Then she, who held her eyes upon the ground,
Elaine, and heard her name so tost about,
Flushed slightly at the slight disparagement
Before the stranger knight, who, looking at her,
Full courtly, yet not falsely, thus returned:
"If what is fair be but for what is fair,
And only queens are to be counted so,
Rash were my judgment then, who deem this maid
Might wear as fair a jewel as is on earth,
Not violating the bond of like to like."

He spoke and ceased: the lily maid Elaine,
Won by the mellow voice before she looked,
Lifted her eyes and read his lineaments.
The great and guilty love he bare the Queen,
In battle with the love he bare his lord,
Had marred his face, and marked it ere his time.
Another sinning on such heights with one,
The flower of all the west and all the world,
Had been the sleeker for it; but in him
His mood was often like a fiend, and rose
And drove him into wastes and solitudes
For agony, who was yet a living soul.
Marred as he was, he seemed the goodliest man
That ever among ladies ate in Hall,
And noblest, when she lifted up her eyes.
However marred, of more than twice her years,
Seamed with an ancient sword-cut on the cheek,
And bruised and bronzed, she lifted up her eyes
And loved him, with that love which was her doom.

Then the great knight, the darling of the court,
Loved of the loveliest, into that rude hall
Stept with all grace, and not with half disdain

Hid under grace, as in a smaller time,
But kindly man moving among his kind:
Whom they with meats and vintage of their best
And talk and minstrel melody entertained.
And much they asked of court and Table Round,
And ever well and readily answered he;
But Lancelot, when they glanced at Guinevere,
Suddenly speaking of the wordless man,
Heard from the baron that, ten years before,
The heathen caught and reft him of his tongue.
"He learnt and warned me of their fierce design
Against my house, and him they caught and maimed;
But I, my sons, and little daughter fled
From bonds or death, and dwelt among the woods
By the great river in a boatman's hut.
Dull days were those, till our good Arthur broke
The Pagan yet once more on Badon hill."

"O there, great lord, doubtless," Lavaine said, rapt
By all the sweet and sudden passion of youth
Toward greatness in its elder, "you have fought.
O tell us — for we live apart — you know
Of Arthur's glorious wars." And Lancelot spoke
And answered him at full, as having been
With Arthur in the fight which all day long
Rang by the white mouth of the violent Glem;
And in the four loud battles by the shore
Of Duglas; that on Bassa; then the war
That thundered in and out the gloomy skirts
Of Celidon the forest; and again
By Castle Gurnion, where the glorious King
Had on his cuirass worn our Lady's Head,
Carved of one emerald centered in a sun
Of silver rays, that lightened as he breathed;
And at Caerleon had he helped his lord,
When the strong neighings of the wild white Horse
Set every gilded parapet shuddering;
And up in Agned-Cathregonion too,

And down the waste sand-shores of Trath Treroit,
Where many a heathen fell; "and on the mount
Of Badon I myself beheld the King
Charge at the head of all his Table Round,
And all his legions crying Christ and him,
And break them; and I saw him, after, stand
High on a heap of slain, from spur to plume
Red as the rising sun with heathen blood,
And seeing me, with a great voice he cried,
'They are broken, they are broken!' for the King,
However mild he seems at home, nor cares
For triumph in our mimic wars, the jousts —
For if his own knight cast him down, he laughs,
Saying his knights are better men than he —
Yet in this heathen war the fire of God
Fills him: I never saw his like; there lives
No greater leader."

While he uttered this,
Low to her own heart said the lily maid,
"Save your great self, fair lord;" and when he fell
From talk of war to traits of pleasantry —
Being mirthful he, but in a stately kind —
She still took note that when the living smile
Died from his lips, across him came a cloud
Of melancholy severe, from which again,
Whenever in her hovering to and fro
The lily maid had striven to make him cheer,
There brake a sudden-beaming tenderness
Of manners and of nature: and she thought
That all was nature, all, perchance, for her.
And all night long his face before her lived,
As when a painter, poring on a face,
Divinely thro' all hindrance finds the man
Behind it, and so paints him that his face,
The shape and color of a mind and life,
Lives for his children, ever at its best
And fullest; so the face before her lived,

Dark-splendid, speaking in the silence, full
Of noble things, and held her from her sleep,
Till rathe she rose, half-cheated in the thought
She needs must bid farewell to sweet Lavaine.
First as in fear, step after step, she stole
Down the long tower-stairs, hesitating:
Anon, she heard Sir Lancelot cry in the court,
"This shield, my friend, where is it?" and Lavaine
Passed inward, as she came from out the tower.
There to his proud horse Lancelot turned, and smoothed
The glossy shoulder, humming to himself.
Half-envious of the flattering hand, she drew
Nearer and stood. He looked, and, more amazed
Than if seven men had set upon him, saw
The maiden standing in the dewy light.
He had not dreamed she was so beautiful.
Then came on him a sort of sacred fear,
For silent, tho' he greeted her, she stood
Rapt on his face as if it were a God's.
Suddenly flashed on her a wild desire
That he should wear her favor at the tilt.
She braved a riotous heart in asking for it.
"Fair lord, whose name I know not — noble it is,
I well believe, the noblest — will you wear
My favor at this tourney?" "Nay," said he,
"Fair lady, since I never yet have worn
Favor of any lady in the lists.
Such is my wont, as those who know me, know."
"Yea, so," she answered; "then in wearing mine
Needs must be lesser likelihood, noble lord,
That those who know should know you." And he turned
Her counsel up and down within his mind,
And found it true, and answered: "True, my child.
Well, I will wear it: fetch it out to me:
What is it?" and she told him, "A red sleeve
Broidered with pearls," and brought it: then he bound
Her token on his helmet, with a smile
Saying, "I never yet have done so much

For any maiden living," and the blood
Sprang to her face and filled her with delight;
But left her all the paler, when Lavaine
Returning brought the yet-unblazoned shield,
His brother's; which he gave to Lancelot,
Who parted with his own to fair Elaine:
"Do me this grace, my child, to have my shield
In keeping till I come." "A grace to me,"
She answered, "twice to-day. I am your squire!"
Whereat Lavaine said, laughing: "Lily maid,
For fear our people call you lily maid
In earnest, let me bring your color back;
Once, twice, and thrice: now get you hence to bed:"
So kissed her, and Sir Lancelot his own hand,
And thus they moved away: she stayed a minute,
Then made a sudden step to the gate, and there —
Her bright hair blown about the serious face
Yet rosy kindled with her brother's kiss —
Paused by the gateway, standing near the shield
In silence, while she watched their arms far-off
Sparkle, until they dipt below the downs.
Then to her tower she climbed, and took the shield,
There kept it, and so lived in fantasy.

Meanwhile the new companions passed away
Far o'er the long backs of the bushless downs,
To where Sir Lancelot knew there lived a knight
Not far from Camelot, now for forty years
A hermit, who had prayed, labored and prayed,
And ever laboring had scooped himself
In the white rock a chapel and a hall
On massive columns, like a shore-cliff cave,
And cells and chambers: all were fair and dry;
The green light from the meadows underneath
Struck up and lived along the milky roofs;
And in the meadows tremulous aspen-trees
And poplars made a noise of falling showers,
And thither wending there that night they bode.

But when the next day broke from underground,
And shot red fire and shadows thro' the cave,
They rose, heard mass, broke fast, and rode away.
Then Lancelot saying, "Hear, but hold my name
Hidden, you ride with Lancelot of the Lake,"
Abashed Lavaine, whose instant reverence,
Dearer to true young hearts than their own praise,
But left him leave to stammer, "Is it indeed?"
And after muttering, "The great Lancelot,"
At last he got his breath and answered: "One,
One have I seen — that other, our liege lord,
The dread Pendragon, Britain's King of kings,
Of whom the people talk mysteriously,
He will be there — then were I stricken blind
That minute, I might say that I had seen."

So spake Lavaine, and when they reached the lists
By Camelot in the meadow, let his eyes
Run thro' the peopled gallery which half round
Lay like a rainbow fall'n upon the grass,
Until they found the clear-faced King, who sat
Robed in red samite, easily to be known,
Since to his crown the golden dragon clung,
And down his robe the dragon writhed in gold,
And from the carven-work behind him crept
Two dragons gilded, sloping down to make
Arms for his chair, while all the rest of them
Thro' knots and loops and folds innumerable
Fled ever thro' the woodwork, till they found
The new design wherein they lost themselves,
Yet with all ease, so tender was the work:
And, in the costly canopy o'er him set,
Blazed the last diamond of the nameless king.

Then Lancelot answered young Lavaine and said:
"Me you call great: mine is the firmer seat,
The truer lance: but there is many a youth
Now crescent, who will come to all I am

And overcome it; and in me there dwells
No greatness, save it be some far-off touch
Of greatness to know well I am not great:
There is the man." And Lavaine gaped upon him
As on a thing miraculous, and anon
The trumpets blew; and then did either side,
They that assailed, and they that held the lists,
Set lance in rest, strike spur, suddenly move,
Meet in the midst, and there so furiously
Shock, that a man far-off might well perceive,
If any man that day were left afield,
The hard earth shake, and a low thunder of arms.
And Lancelot bode a little, till he saw
Which were the weaker; then he hurled into it
Against the stronger: little need to speak
Of Lancelot in his glory! King, duke, earl,
Count, baron — whom he smote, he overthrew.

But in the field were Lancelot's kith and kin,
Ranged with the Table Round that held the lists,
Strong men, and wrathful that a stranger knight
Should do and almost overdo the deeds
Of Lancelot; and one said to the other, "Lo!
What is he? I do not mean the force alone,
The grace and versatility of the man —
Is it not Lancelot?" "When has Lancelot worn
Favor of any lady in the lists?
Not such his wont, as we that know him, know."
"How then? who then?" a fury seized them all,
A fiery family passion for the name
Of Lancelot, and a glory one with theirs.
They couched their spears and pricked their steeds, and thus,
Their plumes driv'n backward by the wind they made
In moving, all together down upon him
Bare, as a wild wave in the wide North Sea,
Green-glimmering toward the summit, bears, with all
Its stormy crests that smoke against the skies,
Down on a bark, and overbears the bark,

And him that helms it; so they overbore
Sir Lancelot and his charger, and a spear
Down-glancing lamed the charger, and a spear
Pricked sharply his own cuirass, and the head
Pierced thro' his side, and there snapt and remained.

Then Sir Lavaine did well and worshipfully:
He bore a knight of old repute to the earth,
And brought his horse to Lancelot where he lay.
He up the side, sweating with agony, got,
But thought to do while he might yet endure,
And being lustily holpen by the rest,
His party, — tho' it seemed half-miracle
To those he fought with, — drave his kith and kin,
And all the Table Round that held the lists,
Back to the barrier; then the trumpets blew
Proclaiming his the prize who wore the sleeve
Of scarlet and the pearls; and all the knights,
His party, cried, "Advance and take thy prize
The diamond;" but he answered: "Diamond me
No diamonds! for God's love, a little air!
Prize me no prizes, for my prize is death!
Hence will I, and I charge you, follow me not."

He spoke, and vanished suddenly from the field
With young Lavaine into the poplar grove.
There from his charger down he slid, and sat,
Gasping to Sir Lavaine, "Draw the lance-head."
"Ah, my sweet lord Sir Lancelot," said Lavaine,
"I dread me, if I draw it, you will die."
But he, "I die already with it: draw —
Draw," — and Lavaine drew, and Sir Lancelot gave
A marvellous great shriek and ghastly groan,
And half his blood burst forth, and down he sank
For the pure pain, and wholly swooned away.
Then came the hermit out and bare him in,
There stanched his wound; and there, in daily doubt
Whether to live or die, for many a week

Hid from the wide world's rumor by the grove
Of poplars with their noise of falling showers,
And ever-tremulous aspen-trees, he lay.

But on that day when Lancelot fled the lists,
His party, knights of utmost North and West,
Lords of waste marches, kings of desolate isles,
Came round their great Pendragon, saying to him,
"Lo, Sire, our knight, thro' whom we won the day,
Hath gone sore wounded, and hath left his prize
Untaken, crying that his prize is death."
"Heaven hinder," said the King, "that such an one,
So great a knight as we have seen to-day —
He seemed to me another Lancelot —
Yea, twenty times I thought him Lancelot —
He must not pass uncared for. Wherefore rise,
O Gawain, and ride forth and find the knight.
Wounded and wearied, needs must he be near.
I charge you that you get at once to horse.
And, knights and kings, there breathes not one of you
Will deem this prize of ours is rashly given:
His prowess was too wondrous. We will do him
No customary honor: since the knight
Came not to us, of us to claim the prize,
Ourselves will send it after. Rise and take
This diamond, and deliver it, and return,
And bring us where he is, and how he fares,
And cease not from your quest until ye find."

So saying, from the carven flower above,
To which it made a restless heart, he took
And gave the diamond: then from where he sat
At Arthur's right, with smiling face arose,
With smiling face and frowning heart, a prince
In the mid might and flourish of his May,
Gawain, surnamed The Courteous, fair and strong,
And after Lancelot, Tristram, and Geraint
And Gareth, a good knight, but therewithal

Sir Modred's brother, and the child of Lot,
Nor often loyal to his word, and now
Wroth that the King's command to sally forth
In quest of whom he knew not, made him leave
The banquet and concourse of knights and kings.

So all in wrath he got to horse and went;
While Arthur to the banquet, dark in mood,
Passed, thinking, "Is it Lancelot who hath come
Despite the wound he spake of, all for gain
Of glory, and hath added wound to wound,
And ridd'n away to die?" So feared the King,
And, after two days' tarriance there, returned.
Then when he saw the Queen, embracing asked,
"Love, are you yet so sick?" "Nay, lord," she said.
"And where is Lancelot?" Then the Queen amazed,
"Was he not with you? won he not your prize?"
"Nay, but one like him." "Why, that like was he."
And when the King demanded how she knew,
Said: "Lord, no sooner had ye parted from us,
Than Lancelot told me of a common talk
That men went down before his spear at a touch,
But knowing he was Lancelot; his great name
Conquered; and therefore would he hide his name
From all men, ev'n the King, and to this end
Had made the pretext of a hindering wound,
That he might joust unknown of all, and learn
If his old prowess were in aught decayed;
And added, 'Our true Arthur, when he learns,
Will well allow my pretext, as for gain
Of purer glory.'"

Then replied the King:
"Far lovelier in our Lancelot had it been,
In lieu of idly dallying with the truth,
To have trusted me as he hath trusted thee.
Surely his King and most familiar friend
Might well have kept his secret. True, indeed,

Albeit I know my knights fantastical,
So fine a fear in our large Lancelot
Must needs have moved my laughter: now remains
But little cause for laughter: his own kin —
Ill news, my Queen, for all who love him, this! —
His kith and kin, not knowing, set upon him;
So that he went sore wounded from the field:
Yet good news too; for goodly hopes are mine
That Lancelot is no more a lonely heart.
He wore, against his wont, upon his helm
A sleeve of scarlet, broidered with great pearls,
Some gentle maiden's gift."

"Yea, lord," she said,
"Thy hopes are mine," and saying that, she choked,
And sharply turned about to hide her face,
Passed to her chamber, and there flung herself
Down on the great King's couch, and writhed upon it,
And clenched her fingers till they bit the palm,
And shrieked out "Traitor!" to the unhearing wall,
Then flashed into wild tears, and rose again,
And moved about her palace, proud and pale.

Gawain the while thro' all the region round
Rode with his diamond, wearied of the quest,
Touched at all points except the poplar grove,
And came at last, tho' late, to Astolat:
Whom glittering in enamelled arms the maid
Glanced at, and cried, "What news from Camelot, lord?
What of the knight with the red sleeve?" "He won."
"I knew it," she said. "But parted from the jousts
Hurt in the side;" whereat she caught her breath;
Thro' her own side she felt the sharp lance go;
Thereon she smote her hand; wellnigh she swooned:
And, while he gazed wonderingly at her, came
The Lord of Astolat out, to whom the prince
Reported who he was, and on what quest
Sent, that he bore the prize and could not find
The victor, but had ridd'n a random round

To seek him, and had wearied of the search.
To whom the Lord of Astolat: "Bide with us,
And ride no more at random, noble prince!
Here was the knight and here he left a shield;
This will he send or come for: furthermore,
Our son is with him; we shall hear anon,
Needs must we hear." To this the courteous prince
Accorded with his wonted courtesy,
Courtesy with a touch of traitor in it,
And stayed; and cast his eyes on fair Elaine:
Where could be found face daintier? then her shape
From forehead down to foot, perfect — again
From foot to forehead exquisitely turned:
"Well — if I bide, lo! this wild flower for me!"
And oft they met among the garden yews,
And there he set himself to play upon her
With sallying wit, free flashes from a height
Above her, graces of the court, and songs,
Sighs, and slow smiles, and golden eloquence
And amorous adulation, till the maid
Rebelled against it, saying to him: "Prince,
O loyal nephew of our noble King,
Why ask you not to see the shield he left,
Whence you might learn his name? Why slight your King,
And lose the quest he sent you on, and prove
No surer than our falcon yesterday,
Who lost the hern we slipt her at, and went
To all the winds?" "Nay, by mine head," said he,
"I lose it, as we lose the lark in heaven,
O damsel, in the light of your blue eyes;
But, an ye will it, let me see the shield."
And when the shield was brought, and Gawain saw
Sir Lancelot's azure lions, crowned with gold,
Ramp in the field, he smote his thigh, and mocked:
"Right was the King! our Lancelot! that true man!"
"And right was I," she answered merrily, "I,
Who dreamed my knight the greatest knight of all."
"And if *I* dreamed," said Gawain, "that you love

This greatest knight, your pardon! lo, ye know it!
Speak therefore: shall I waste myself in vain?"
Full simple was her answer: "What know I?
My brethren have been all my fellowship;
And I, when often they have talked of love,
Wished it had been my mother, for they talked,
Meseemed, of what they knew not; so myself —
I know not if I know what true love is,
But if I know, then, if I love not him,
I know there is none other I can love."
"Yea, by God's death," said he, "ye love him well,
But would not, knew ye what all others know,
And whom he loves." "So be it," cried Elaine,
And lifted her fair face and moved away:
But he pursued her, calling, "Stay a little!
One golden minute's grace! he wore your sleeve:
Would he break faith with one I may not name?
Must our true man change like a leaf at last?
Nay — like enow: why then, far be it from me
To cross our mighty Lancelot in his loves!
And, damsel, for I deem you know full well
Where your great knight is hidden, let me leave
My quest with you; the diamond also: here!
For if you love, it will be sweet to give it;
And if he love, it will be sweet to have it
From your own hand; and whether he love or not,
A diamond is a diamond. Fare you well
A thousand times! — a thousand times farewell!
Yet, if he love, and his love hold, we two
May meet at court hereafter: there, I think,
So ye will learn the courtesies of the court,
We two shall know each other."

Then he gave,
And slightly kissed the hand to which he gave,
The diamond, and all wearied of the quest
Leapt on his horse, and carolling as he went
A true-love ballad, lightly rode away.

Thence to the court he passed; there told the King
What the King knew, "Sir Lancelot is the knight."
And added, "Sire, my liege, so much I learnt;
But failed to find him, tho' I rode all round
The region: but I lighted on the maid
Whose sleeve he wore; she loves him; and to her,
Deeming our courtesy is the truest law,
I gave the diamond: she will render it;
For by mine head she knows his hiding-place."

The seldom-frowning King frowned, and replied,
"Too courteous truly! ye shall go no more
On quest of mine, seeing that ye forget
Obedience is the courtesy due to kings."

He spake and parted. Wroth, but all in awe,
For twenty strokes of the blood, without a word,
Lingered that other, staring after him;
Then shook his hair, strode off, and buzzed abroad
About the maid of Astolat, and her love.
All ears were pricked at once, all tongues were loosed:
"The maid of Astolat loves Sir Lancelot,
Sir Lancelot loves the maid of Astolat."
Some read the King's face, some the Queen's, and all
Had marvel what the maid might be, but most
Predoomed her as unworthy. One old dame
Came suddenly on the Queen with the sharp news.
She, that had heard the noise of it before,
But sorrowing Lancelot should have stooped so low,
Marred her friend's aim with pale tranquillity.
So ran the tale like fire about the court,
Fire in dry stubble a nine-days' wonder flared:
Till ev'n the knights at banquet twice or thrice
Forgot to drink to Lancelot and the Queen,
And, pledging Lancelot and the lily maid,
Smiled at each other, while the Queen, who sat
With lips severely placid, felt the knot

Climb in her throat, and with her feet unseen
Crushed the wild passion out against the floor
Beneath the banquet, where the meats became
As wormwood, and she hated all who pledged.

But far away the maid in Astolat,
Her guiltless rival, she that ever kept
The one-day-seen Sir Lancelot in her heart,
Crept to her father, while he mused alone,
Sat on his knee, stroked his gray face and said:
"Father, you call me wilful, and the fault
Is yours who let me have my will, and now,
Sweet father, will you let me lose my wits?"
"Nay," said he, "surely." "Wherefore, let me hence,"
She answered, "and find out our dear Lavaine."
"Ye will not lose your wits for dear Lavaine:
Bide," answered he: "we needs must hear anon
Of him, and of that other." "Ay," she said,
"And of that other, for I needs must hence
And find that other, wheresoe'er he be,
And with mine own hand give his diamond to him,
Lest I be found as faithless in the quest
As yon proud prince who left the quest to me.
Sweet father, I behold him in my dreams
Gaunt as it were the skeleton of himself,
Death-pale, for lack of gentle maiden's aid.
The gentler-born the maiden, the more bound,
My father, to be sweet and serviceable
To noble knights in sickness, as ye know,
When these have worn their tokens: let me hence,
I pray you." Then her father nodding said:
"Ay, ay, the diamond: wit ye well, my child,
Right fain were I to learn this knight were whole,
Being our greatest: yea, and you must give it —
And sure I think this fruit is hung too high
For any mouth to gape for save a queen's —
Nay, I mean nothing: so then, get you gone,
Being so very wilful you must go."

Lightly, her suit allowed, she slipt away,
And while she made her ready for her ride,
Her father's latest word hummed in her ear,
"Being so very wilful you must go,"
And changed itself and echoed in her heart,
"Being so very wilful you must die."
But she was happy enough and shook it off,
As we shake off the bee that buzzes at us;
And in her heart she answered it and said,
"What matter, so I help him back to life?"
Then far away with good Sir Torre for guide
Rode o'er the long backs of the bushless downs
To Camelot, and before the city-gates
Came on her brother with a happy face
Making a roan horse caper and curvet
For pleasure all about a field of flowers;
Whom when she saw, "Lavaine," she cried, "Lavaine,
How fares my lord Sir Lancelot?" He amazed,
"Torre and Elaine! why here? Sir Lancelot!
How know ye my lord's name is Lancelot?"
But when the maid had told him all her tale,
Then turned Sir Torre, and being in his moods
Left them, and under the strange-statued gate,
Where Arthur's wars were rendered mystically,
Passed up the still rich city to his kin,
His own far blood, which dwelt at Camelot;
And her, Lavaine across the poplar grove
Led to the caves: there first she saw the casque
Of Lancelot on the wall: her scarlet sleeve,
Tho' carved and cut, and half the pearls away,
Streamed from it still; and in her heart she laughed,
Because he had not loosed it from his helm,
But meant once more perchance to tourney in it.
And when they gained the cell wherein he slept,
His battle-writhen arms and mighty hands
Lay naked on the wolf-skin, and a dream
Of dragging down his enemy made them move.
Then she that saw him lying unsleek, unshorn,

Gaunt as it were the skeleton of himself,
Uttered a little tender dolorous cry.
The sound not wonted in a place so still
Woke the sick knight, and while he rolled his eyes
Yet blank from sleep, she started to him, saying,
" Your prize the diamond sent you by the King."
His eyes glistened: she fancied, " Is it for me? "
And when the maid had told him all the tale
Of king and prince, the diamond sent, the quest
Assigned to her not worthy of it, she knelt
Full lowly by the corners of his bed,
And laid the diamond in his open hand.
Her face was near, and as we kiss the child
That does the task assigned, he kissed her face.
At once she slipt like water to the floor.
" Alas," he said, " your ride hath wearied you.
Rest must you have." " No rest for me," she said:
" Nay, for near you, fair lord, I am at rest."
What might she mean by that? his large black eyes,
Yet larger thro' his leanness, dwelt upon her,
Till all her heart's sad secret blazed itself
In the heart's colors on her simple face;
And Lancelot looked and was perplext in mind,
And being weak in body said no more,
But did not love the color; woman's love,
Save one, he not regarded, and so turned
Sighing, and feigned a sleep until he slept.

Then rose Elaine and glided thro' the fields,
And passed beneath the weirdly-sculptured gates
Far up the dim rich city to her kin;
There bode the night: but woke with dawn, and passed
Down thro' the dim rich city to the fields,
Thence to the cave. So day by day she passed,
In either twilight ghost-like to and fro
Gliding, and every day she tended him,
And likewise many a night; and Lancelot
Would, tho' he called his wound a little hurt

Whereof he should be quickly whole, at times
Brain-feverous in his heat and agony, seem
Uncourteous, even he: but the meek maid
Sweetly forbore him ever, being to him
Meeker than any child to a rough nurse,
Milder than any mother to a sick child,
And never woman yet, since man's first fall,
Did kindlier unto man, but her deep love
Upbore her; till the hermit, skilled in all
The simples and the science of that time,
Told him that her fine care had saved his life.
And the sick man forgot her simple blush,
Would call her friend and sister, sweet Elaine,
Would listen for her coming and regret
Her parting step, and held her tenderly,
And loved her with all love except the love
Of man and woman when they love their best,
Closest and sweetest, and had died the death
In any knightly fashion for her sake.
And peradventure had he seen her first
She might have made this and that other world
Another world for the sick man; but now
The shackles of an old love straitened him,
His honor rooted in dishonor stood,
And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true.

Yet the great knight in his mid-sickness made
Full many a holy vow and pure resolve.
These, as but born of sickness, could not live:
For when the blood ran lustier in him again,
Full often the bright image of one face,
Making a treacherous quiet in his heart,
Dispersed his resolution like a cloud.
Then if the maiden, while that ghostly grace
Beamed on his fancy, spoke, he answered not,
Or short and coldly, and she knew right well
What the rough sickness meant, but what this meant
She knew not, and the sorrow dimmed her sight,

And drave her ere her time across the fields
Far into the rich city, where alone
She murmured, " Vain, in vain: it cannot be.
He will not love me: how then? must I die? "
Then as a little helpless innocent bird,
That has but one plain passage of few notes,
Will sing the simple passage o'er and o'er
For all an April morning, till the ear
Wearies to hear it, so the simple maid
Went half the night repeating, " Must I die? "
And now to right she turned, and now to left,
And found no ease in turning or in rest;
And " Him or death," she muttered, " death or him,"
Again and like a burthen, " Him or death."

But when Sir Lancelot's deadly hurt was whole,
To Astolat returning rode the three.
There morn by morn, arraying her sweet self
In that wherein she deemed she looked her best,
She came before Sir Lancelot, for she thought
" If I be loved, these are my festal robes,
If not, the victim's flowers before he fall."
And Lancelot ever prest upon the maid
That she should ask some goodly gift of him
For her own self or hers: " and do not shun
To speak the wish most near to your true heart;
Such service have ye done me that I make
My will of yours, and prince and lord am I
In mine own land, and what I will I can."
Then like a ghost she lifted up her face,
But like a ghost without the power to speak.
And Lancelot saw that she withheld her wish,
And bode among them yet a little space
Till he should learn it; and one morn it chanced
He found her in among the garden yews,
And said, " Delay no longer, speak your wish,
Seeing I go to-day: " then out she brake:
" Going? and we shall never see you more.

And I must die for want of one bold word."
"Speak: that I live to hear," he said, "is yours."
Then suddenly and passionately she spoke:
"I have gone mad. I love you: let me die."
"Ah, sister," answered Lancelot, "what is this?"
And innocently extending her white arms,
"Your love," she said, "your love — to be your wife."
And Lancelot answered, "Had I chosen to wed,
I had been wedded earlier, sweet Elaine;
But now there never will be wife of mine."
"No, no," she cried, "I care not to be wife,
But to be with you still, to see your face,
To serve you, and to follow you thro' the world."
And Lancelot answered: "Nay, the world, the world,
All ear and eye, with such a stupid heart
To interpret ear and eye, and such a tongue
To blare its own interpretation — nay,
Full ill then should I quit your brother's love,
And your good father's kindness." And she said,
"Not to be with you, not to see your face —
Alas for me then, my good days are done!"
"Nay, noble maid," he answered, "ten times nay!
This is not love, but love's first flash in youth,
Most common: yea, I know it of mine own self;
And you yourself will smile at your own self
Hereafter, when you yield your flower of life
To one more fitly yours, not thrice your age:
And then will I, for true you are and sweet
Beyond mine old belief in womanhood,
More specially should your good knight be poor,
Endow you with broad land and territory
Even to the half my realm beyond the seas,
So that would make you happy: furthermore,
Ev'n to the death, as tho' ye were my blood,
In all your quarrels will I be your knight.
This will I do, dear damsel, for your sake,
And more than this I cannot."

While he spoke
She neither blushed nor shook, but deathly-pale
Stood grasping what was nearest, then replied,
" Of all this will I nothing; " and so fell,
And thus they bore her swooning to her tower.

Then spake, to whom thro' those black walls of yew
Their talk had pierced, her father: " Ay, a flash,
I fear me, that will strike my blossom dead.
Too courteous are ye, fair Lord Lancelot.
I pray you, use some rough discourtesy
To blunt or break her passion."

Lancelot said,
" That were against me: what I can I will; "
And there that day remained, and toward even
Sent for his shield: full meekly rose the maid,
Stript off the case, and gave the naked shield;
Then, when she heard his horse upon the stones,
Unclasping flung the casement back, and looked
Down on his helm, from which her sleeve had gone.
And Lancelot knew the little clinking sound;
And she by tact of love was well aware
That Lancelot knew that she was looking at him.
And yet he glanced not up, nor waved his hand,
Nor bade farewell, but sadly rode away.
This was the one discourtesy that he used.

So in her tower alone the maiden sat:
His very shield was gone; only the case,
Her own poor work, her empty labor, left.
But still she heard him, still his picture formed
And grew between her and the pictured wall.
Then came her father, saying in low tones,
" Have comfort," whom she greeted quietly.
Then came her brethren saying, " Peace to thee,
Sweet sister," whom she answered with all calm.
But when they left her to herself again,

Death, like a friend's voice from a distant field
Approaching thro' the darkness, called; the owls
Wailing had power upon her, and she mixt
Her fancies with the sallow-rifted glooms
Of evening, and the moanings of the wind.

And in those days she made a little song,
And called her song "The Song of Love and Death,"
And sang it: sweetly could she make and sing.

"Sweet is true love tho' given in vain, in vain;
And sweet is death who puts an end to pain:
I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

"Love, art thou sweet? then bitter death must be:
Love, thou art bitter; sweet is death to me.
O Love, if death be sweeter, let me die.

"Sweet love, that seems not made to fade away,
Sweet death, that seems to make us loveless clay,
I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

"I fain would follow love, if that could be;
I needs must follow death, who calls for me;
Call and I follow, I follow! let me die."

High with the last line scaled her voice, and this,
All in a fiery dawning wild with wind
That shook her tower, the brothers heard, and thought
With shuddering, "Hark the Phantom of the house
That ever shrieks before a death," and called
The father, and all three in hurry and fear
Ran to her, and lo! the blood-red light of dawn
Flared on her face, she shrilling, "Let me die!"

As when we dwell upon a word we know,
Repeating, till the word we know so well

Becomes a wonder, and we know not why,
So dwelt the father on her face, and thought
"Is this Elaine?" till back the maiden fell,
Then gave a languid hand to each, and lay,
Speaking a still good-morrow with her eyes.
At last she said: "Sweet brothers, yesternight
I seemed a curious little maid again,
As happy as when we dwelt among the woods,
And when ye used to take me with the flood
Up the great river in the boatman's boat.
Only ye would not pass beyond the cape
That had the poplar on it: there ye fixt
Your limit, oft returning with the tide.
And yet I cried because ye would not pass
Beyond it, and far up the shining flood
Until we found the palace of the King.
And yet ye would not; but this night I dreamed
That I was all alone upon the flood,
And then I said, 'Now shall I have my will:'
And there I woke, but still the wish remained.
So let me hence that I may pass at last
Beyond the poplar and far up the flood,
Until I find the palace of the King.
There will I enter in among them all,
And no man there will dare to mock at me;
But there the fine Gawain will wonder at me,
And there the great Sir Lancelot muse at me;
Gawain, who bade a thousand farewells to me,
Lancelot, who coldly went, nor bade me one:
And there the King will know me and my love,
And there the Queen herself will pity me,
And all the gentle court will welcome me,
And after my long voyage I shall rest!"

"Peace," said her father, "O my child, ye seem
Light-headed, for what force is yours to go
So far, being sick? and wherefore would ye look
On this proud fellow again, who scorns us all?"

Then the rough Torre began to heave and move,
And bluster into stormy sobs and say:
"I never loved him: an I meet with him,
I care not howsoever great he be,
Then will I strike at him and strike him down;
Give me good fortune, I will strike him dead,
For this discomfort he hath done the house."

To whom the gentle sister made reply:
"Fret not yourself, dear brother, nor be wroth,
Seeing it is no more Sir Lancelot's fault
Not to love me, than it is mine to love
Him of all men who seems to me the highest."

"Highest?" the father answered, echoing "highest?" —
He meant to break the passion in her — "nay,
Daughter, I know not what you call the highest;
But this I know, for all the people know it,
He loves the Queen, and in an open shame:
And she returns his love in open shame;
If this be high, what is it to be low?"

Then spake the lily maid of Astolat:
"Sweet father, all too faint and sick am I
For anger: these are slanders; never yet
Was noble man but made ignoble talk.
He makes no friend who never made a foe.
But now it is my glory to have loved
One peerless, without stain: so let me pass,
My father, howsoe'er I seem to you,
Not all unhappy, having loved God's best
And greatest, tho' my love had no return:
Yet, seeing you desire your child to live,
Thanks, but you work against your own desire;
For if I could believe the things you say
I should but die the sooner; wherefore cease,
Sweet father, and bid call the ghostly man
Hither, and let me shrive me clean, and die."

So when the ghostly man had come and gone,
She, with a face bright as for sin forgiven,
Besought Lavaine to write as she devised
A letter, word for word; and when he asked,
"Is it for Lancelot, is it for my dear lord?
Then will I bear it gladly;" she replied,
"For Lancelot and the Queen and all the world,
But I myself must bear it." Then he wrote
The letter she devised; which being writ
And folded, "O sweet father, tender and true,
Deny me not," she said — "ye never yet
Denied my fancies — this, however strange,
My latest: lay the letter in my hand
A little ere I die, and close the hand
Upon it; I shall guard it even in death,
And when the heat is gone from out my heart,
Then take the little bed on which I died
For Lancelot's love, and deck it like the Queen's
For richness, and me also like the Queen
In all I have of rich, and lay me on it.
And let there be prepared a chariot-bier
To take me to the river, and a barge
Be ready on the river, clothed in black.
I go in state to court, to meet the Queen.
There surely I shall speak for mine own self,
And none of you can speak for me so well.
And therefore let our dumb old man alone
Go with me; he can steer and row, and he
Will guide me to that palace, to the doors."

She ceased: her father promised; whereupon
She grew so cheerful that they deemed her death
Was rather in the fantasy than the blood.
But ten slow mornings passed, and on the eleventh
Her father laid the letter in her hand,
And closed the hand upon it, and she died.
So that day there was dole in Astolat.

But when the next sun brake from underground,
Then, those two brethren slowly with bent brows
Accompanying, the sad chariot-bier
Passed like a shadow thro' the field, that shone
Full-summer, to that stream whereon the barge,
Palled all its length in blackest samite, lay.
There sat the lifelong creature of the house,
Loyal, the dumb old servitor, on deck,
Winking his eyes, and twisted all his face.
So those two brethren from the chariot took
And on the black decks laid her in her bed,
Set in her hand a lily, o'er her hung
The silken case with braided blazonings,
And kissed her quiet brows, and saying to her,
"Sister, farewell for ever," and again
"Farewell, sweet sister," parted all in tears.
Then rose the dumb old servitor, and the dead,
Oared by the dumb, went upward with the flood —
In her right hand the lily, in her left
The letter — all her bright hair streaming down —
And all the coverlid was cloth of gold
Drawn to her waist, and she herself in white
All but her face, and that clear-featured face
Was lovely, for she did not seem as dead,
But fast asleep, and lay as tho' she smiled.

That day Sir Lancelot at the palace craved
Audience of Guinevere, to give at last
The price of half a realm, his costly gift,
Hard-won and hardly won with bruise and blow,
With deaths of others, and almost his own,
The nine-years-fought-for diamonds: for he saw
One of her house, and sent him to the Queen
Bearing his wish, whereto the Queen agreed
With such and so unmoved a majesty
She might have seemed her statue, but that he,
Low-drooping till he wellnigh kissed her feet
For loyal awe, saw with a sidelong eye

The shadow of some piece of pointed lace,
In the Queen's shadow, vibrate on the walls,
And parted, laughing in his courtly heart.

All in an oriel on the summer side,
Vine-clad, of Arthur's palace toward the stream,
They met, and Lancelot kneeling uttered, "Queen,
Lady, my liege, in whom I have my joy,
Take, what I had not won except for you,
These jewels, and make me happy, making them
An armlet for the roundest arm on earth,
Or necklace for a neck to which the swan's
Is tawnier than her cygnet's: these are words:
Your beauty is your beauty, and I sin
In speaking, yet O grant my worship of it
Words, as we grant grief tears. Such sin in words
Perchance, we both can pardon: but, my Queen,
I hear of rumors flying thro' your court.
Our bond, as not the bond of man and wife,
Should have in it an absoluter trust
To make up that defect: let rumors be:
When did not rumors fly? these, as I trust
That you trust me in your own nobleness,
I may not well believe that you believe."

While thus he spoke, half turned away, the Queen
Brake from the vast oriel-embowering vine
Leaf after leaf, and tore, and cast them off,
Till all the place whereon she stood was green;
Then, when he ceased, in one cold passive hand
Received at once and laid aside the gems
There on a table near her, and replied:

"It may be I am quicker of belief
Than you believe me, Lancelot of the Lake.
Our bond is not the bond of man and wife.
This good is in it, whatsoe'er of ill,
It can be broken easier. I for you

This many a year have done despite and wrong
To one whom ever in my heart of hearts
I did acknowledge nobler. What are these?
Diamonds for me! they had been thrice their worth
Being your gift, had you not lost your own.
To loyal hearts the value of all gifts
Must vary as the giver's. Not for me!
For her! for your new fancy. Only this
Grant me, I pray you: have your joys apart.
I doubt not that, however changed, you keep
So much of what is graceful: and myself
Would shun to break those bounds of courtesy
In which as Arthur's Queen I move and rule:
So cannot speak my mind. An end to this!
A strange one! yet I take it with Amen.
So pray you, add my diamonds to her pearls;
Deck her with these; tell her she shines me down:
An armlet for an arm to which the Queen's
Is haggard, or a necklace for a neck
O as much fairer — as a faith once fair
Was richer than these diamonds — hers not mine —
Nay, by the mother of our Lord himself,
Or hers or mine, mine now to work my will —
She shall not have them."

Saying which she seized,
And, thro' the casement standing wide for heat,
Flung them, and down they flashed, and smote the stream.
Then from the smitten surface flashed, as it were,
Diamonds to meet them, and they passed away.
Then, while Sir Lancelot leant, in half disdain
At love, life, all things, on the window ledge,
Close underneath his eyes, and right across
Where these had fallen, slowly passed the barge
Whereon the lily maid of Astolat
Lay smiling, like a star in blackest night.

But the wild Queen, who saw not, burst away
To weep and wail in secret; and the barge,

On to the palace-doorway sliding, paused.
There two stood armed, and kept the door; to whom,
All up the marble stair, tier over tier,
Were added mouths that gaped, and eyes that asked,
"What is it?" but that oarsman's haggard face,
As hard and still as is the face that men
Shape to their fancy's eye from broken rocks
On some cliff-side, appalled them, and they said,
"He is enchanted, cannot speak — and she,
Look how she sleeps — the Fairy Queen, so fair!
Yea, but how pale! what are they? flesh and blood
Or come to take the King to Fairyland?
For some do hold our Arthur cannot die,
But that he passes into Fairyland."

While thus they babbled of the King, the King
Came girt with knights: then turned the tongueless man
From the half-face to the full eye, and rose
And pointed to the damsel, and the doors.
So Arthur bade the meek Sir Percivale
And pure Sir Galahad to uplift the maid;
And reverently they bore her into hall.
Then came the fine Gawain and wondered at her,
And Lancelot later came and mused at her,
And last the Queen herself, and pitied her:
But Arthur spied the letter in her hand,
Stoopt, took, brake seal, and read it; this was all:

"Most noble lord, Sir Lancelot of the Lake,
I, sometime called the maid of Astolat,
Come, for you left me taking no farewell,
Hither, to take my last farewell of you.
I loved you, and my love had no return,
And therefore my true love has been my death.
And therefore to our Lady Guinevere,
And to all other ladies, I make moan:
Pray for my soul, and yield me burial.
Pray for my soul thou too, Sir Lancelot,
As thou art a knight peerless."

Thus he read;
And ever in the reading, lords and dames
Wept, looking often from his face who read
To hers which lay so silent, and at times,
So touched were they, half-thinking that her lips,
Who had devised the letter, moved again.

Then freely spoke Sir Lancelot to them all
"My lord liege Arthur, and all ye that hear,
Know that for this most gentle maiden's death
Right heavy am I; for good she was and true,
But loved me with a love beyond all love
In women, whomsoever I have known.
Yet to be loved makes not to love again;
Not at my years, however it hold in youth.
I swear by truth and knighthood that I gave
No cause, not willingly, for such a love:
To this I call my friends in testimony,
Her brethren, and her father, who himself
Besought me to be plain and blunt, and use,
To break her passion, some discourtesy
Against my nature: what I could, I did.
I left her and I bade her no farewell;
Tho' had I dreamt the damsel would have died,
I might have put my wits to some rough use,
And helped her from herself."

Then said the Queen
(Sea was her wrath, yet working after storm)
"Ye might at least have done her so much grace,
Fair lord, as would have helped her from her death."
He raised his head, their eyes met and hers fell,
He adding:

"Queen, she would not be content
Save that I wedded her, which could not be.
Then might she follow me thro' the world, she asked;
It could not be. I told her that her love
Was but the flash of youth, would darken down,

To rise hereafter in a stiller flame
Toward one more worthy of her — then would I,
More specially were he, she wedded, poor,
Estate them with large land and territory
In mine own realm beyond the narrow seas,
To keep them in all joyance: more than this
I could not; this she would not, and she died."

He pausing, Arthur answered, " O my knight,
It will be to thy worship, as my knight,
And mine, as head of all our Table Round,
To see that she be buried worshipfully."

So toward that shrine which then in all the realm
Was richest, Arthur leading, slowly went
The marshalled Order of their Table Round,
And Lancelot sad beyond his wont, to see
The maiden buried, not as one unknown,
Nor meanly, but with gorgeous obsequies,
And mass, and rolling music, like a queen.
And when the knights had laid her comely head
Low in the dust of half-forgotten kings,
Then Arthur spake among them, " Let her tomb
Be costly, and her image thereupon,
And let the shield of Lancelot at her feet
Be carven, and her lily in her hand.
And let the story of her dolorous voyage
For all true hearts be blazoned on her tomb
In letters gold and azure! " which was wrought
Thereafter; but when now the lords and dames
And people, from the high door streaming, brake
Disorderly, as homeward each, the Queen,
Who marked Sir Lancelot where he moved apart,
Drew near, and sighed in passing, " Lancelot,
Forgive me; mine was jealousy in love."
He answered with his eyes upon the ground,
" That is love's curse; pass on, my Queen, forgiven."
But Arthur, who beheld his cloudy brows,
Approached him, and with full affection said:

"Lancelot, my Lancelot, thou in whom I have
Most joy and most affiance, for I know
What thou hast been in battle by my side,
And many a time have watched thee at the tilt
Strike down the lusty and long-practised knight,
And let the younger and unskilled go by
To win his honor and to make his name,
And loved thy courtesies and thee, a man
Made to be loved; but now I would to God,
Seeing the homeless trouble in thine eyes,
Thou couldst have loved this maiden, shaped, it seems,
By God for thee alone, and from her face,
If one may judge the living by the dead,
Delicately pure and marvellously fair,
Who might have brought thee, now a lonely man
Wifeless and heirless, noble issue, sons
Born to the glory of thy name and fame,
My knight, the great Sir Lancelot of the Lake."

Then answered Lancelot: "Fair she was, my King,
Pure, as you ever wish your knights to be.
To doubt her fairness were to want an eye,
To doubt her pureness were to want a heart —
Yea, to be loved, if what is worthy love
Could bind him, but free love will not be bound."

"Free love, so bound, were freëst," said the King.
"Let love be free; free love is for the best:
And, after heaven, on our dull side of death,
What should be best, if not so pure a love
Clothed in so pure a loveliness? yet thee
She failed to bind, tho' being, as I think,
Unbound as yet, and gentle, as I know."

And Lancelot answered nothing, but he went,
And at the inrunning of a little brook
Sat by the river in a cove, and watched
The high reed wave, and lifted up his eyes
And saw the barge that brought her moving down,

Far-off, a blot upon the stream, and said
Low in himself, " Ah, simple heart and sweet,
Ye loved me, damsel, surely with a love
Far tenderer than my Queen's. Pray for thy soul?
Ay, that will I. Farewell too — now at last —
Farewell, fair lily. ' Jealousy in love? '
Not rather dead love's harsh heir, jealous pride?
Queen, if I grant the jealousy as of love,
May not your crescent fear for name and fame
Speak, as it waxes, of a love that wanes?
Why did the King dwell on my name to me?
Mine own name shames me, seeming a reproach,
Lancelot, whom the Lady of the Lake
Caught from his mother's arms — the wondrous one
Who passes thro' the vision of the night —
She chanted snatches of mysterious hymns
Heard on the winding waters, eve and morn
She kissed me saying, ' Thou art fair, my child,
As a king's son,' and often in her arms
She bare me, pacing on the dusky mere.
Would she had drowned me in it, where'er it be!
For what am I? what profits me my name
Of greatest knight? I fought for it, and have it:
Pleasure to have it, none; to lose it, pain;
Now grown a part of me: but what use in it?
To make men worse by making my sin known?
Or sin seem less, the sinner seeming great?
Alas for Arthur's greatest knight, a man
Not after Arthur's heart! I needs must break
These bonds that so defame me: not without
She wills it: would I, if she willed it? nay,
Who knows? but if I would not, then may God,
I pray him, send a sudden angel down
To seize me by the hair and bear me far,
And fling me deep in that forgotten mere,
Among the tumbled fragments of the hills."

So groaned Sir Lancelot in remorseful pain,
Not knowing he should die a holy man.

THE PASSING OF ARTHUR

That story which the bold Sir Bedivere,
First made and latest left of all the knights,
Told, when the man was no more than a voice
In the white winter of his age, to those
With whom he dwelt, new faces, other minds.

For on their march to westward, Bedivere,
Who slowly paced among the slumbering host,
Heard in his tent the moanings of the King:

"I found Him in the shining of the stars,
I marked Him in the flowering of His fields,
But in His ways with men I find Him not.
I waged His wars, and now I pass and die.
O me! for why is all around us here
As if some lesser god had made the world,
But had not force to shape it as he would,
Till the High God behold it from beyond,
And enter it, and make it beautiful?
Or else as if the world were wholly fair,
But that these eyes of men are dense and dim,
And have not power to see it as it is:
Perchance, because we see not to the close; —
For I, being simple, thought to work His will,
And have but stricken with the sword in vain;
And all whereon I leaned in wife and friend
Is traitor to my peace, and all my realm
Reels back into the beast, and is no more.
My God, thou hast forgotten me in my death:
Nay — God my Christ — I pass but shall not die."

Then, ere that last weird battle in the west,
There came on Arthur sleeping, Gawain killed
In Lancelot's war, the ghost of Gawain blown
Along a wandering wind, and past his ear
Went shrilling, "Hollow, hollow all delight!

Hail, King! to-morrow thou shalt pass away.
Farewell! there is an isle of rest for thee.
And I am blown along a wandering wind,
And hollow, hollow, hollow all delight!"
And fainter onward, like wild birds that change
Their season in the night and wail their way
From cloud to cloud, down the long wind the dream
Shrilled; but in going mingled with dim cries
Far in the moonlit haze among the hills,
As of some lonely city sacked by night,
When all is lost, and wife and child with wail
Pass to new lords; and Arthur woke and called,
"Who spake? A dream. O light upon the wind,
Thine, Gawain, was the voice — are these dim cries
Thine? or doth all that haunts the waste and wild
Mourn, knowing it will go along with me?"

This heard the bold Sir Bedivere and spake:
"O me, my King, let pass whatever will,
Elves, and the harmless glamour of the field;
But in their stead thy name and glory cling
To all high places like a golden cloud
For ever: but as yet thou shalt not pass.
Light was Gawain in life, and light in death
Is Gawain, for the ghost is as the man;
And care not thou for dreams from him, but rise —
I hear the steps of Modred in the west,
And with him many of thy people, and knights
Once thine, whom thou hast loved, but grosser grown
Than heathen, spitting at their vows and thee.
Right well in heart they know thee for the King.
Arise, go forth and conquer as of old."

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
"Far other is this battle in the west
Whereto we move, than when we strove in youth,
And brake the petty kings, and fought with Rome,
And thrust the heathen from the Roman wall,

And shook him thro' the north. Ill doom is mine
To war against my people and my knights.
The king who fights his people fights himself.
And they my knights, who loved me once, the stroke
That strikes them dead is as my death to me.
Yet let us hence, and find or feel a way
Thro' this blind haze which, ever since I saw
One lying in the dust at Almesbury,
Hath folded in the passes of the world."

Then rose the King and moved his host by night,
And ever pushed Sir Modred, league by league,
Back to the sunset bound of Lyonnesse —
A land of old upheaven from the abyss
By fire, to sink into the abyss again;
Where fragments of forgotten peoples dwelt,
And the long mountains ended in a coast
Of ever-shifting sand, and far away
The phantom circle of a moaning sea.
There the pursuer could pursue no more,
And he that fled no further fly the King;
And there, that day when the great light of heaven
Burned at his lowest in the rolling year,
On the waste sand by the waste sea they closed.
Nor ever yet had Arthur fought a fight
Like this last, dim, weird battle of the west.
A deathwhite mist slept over sand and sea,
Whereof the chill, to him who breathed it, drew
Down with his blood, till all his heart was cold
With formless fear; and ev'n on Arthur fell
Confusion, since he saw not whom he fought.
For friend and foe were shadows in the mist,
And friend slew friend not knowing whom he slew;
And some had visions out of golden youth,
And some beheld the faces of old ghosts
Look in upon the battle; and in the mist
Was many a noble deed, many a base,
And chance and craft and strength in single fights,

And ever and anon with host to host
Shocks, and the splintering spear, the hard mail hewn,
Shield-breakings, and the clash of brands, the crash
Of battle-axes on shattered helms, and shrieks
After the Christ, of those who falling down
Looked up for heaven, and only saw the mist;
And shouts of heathen and the traitor knights,
Oaths, insult, filth, and monstrous blasphemies,
Sweat, writhings, anguish, laboring of the lungs
In that close mist, and cryings for the light,
Moans of the dying, and voices of the dead.

Last, as by some one deathbed after wail
Of suffering, silence follows, or thro' death
Or deathlike swoon, thus over all that shore,
Save for some whisper of the seething seas,
A dead hush fell; but when the dolorous day
Grew drearier toward twilight falling, came
A bitter wind, clear from the North, and blew
The mist aside, and with that wind the tide
Rose, and the pale King glanced across the field
Of battle: but no man was moving there;
Nor any cry of Christian heard thereon,
Nor yet of heathen; only the wan wave
Brake in among dead faces, to and fro
Swaying the helpless hands, and up and down
Tumbling the hollow helmets of the fallen,
And shivered brands that once had fought with Rome,
And rolling far along the gloomy shores
The voice of days of old and days to be.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere,
And whiter than the mist that all day long
Had held the field of battle was the King:

"Hearest thou this great voice that shakes the world,
And wastes the narrow realm whereon we move,
And beats upon the faces of the dead,

My dead, as tho' they had not died for me? —
O Bedivere, for on my heart hath fall'n
Confusion, till I know not what I am,
Nor whence I am, nor whether I be King.
Behold, I seem but King among the dead."

Then spake the bold Sir Bedivere: "My King,
King everywhere! and so the dead have kings,
There also will I worship thee as King.
Yet still thy life is whole, and still I live
Who love thee; but who hates thee, he that brought
The heathen back among us, yonder stands,
Modred, unharmed, the traitor of thine house."

Then spake the King: "My house hath been my doom.
But call not thou this traitor of my house
Who hath but dwelt beneath one roof with me.
My house are rather they who sware my vows,
Yea, even while they brake them, owned me King.
And well for thee, saying in my dark hour,
When all the purport of my throne hath failed,
That quick or dead thou holdest me for King.
King am I, whatsoever be their cry;
And one last act of kinghood shalt thou see
Yet, ere I pass." And uttering this the King
Made at the man: then Modred smote his liege
Hard on that helm which many a heathen sword
Had beaten thin; while Arthur at one blow,
Striking the last stroke with Excalibur,
Slew him, and, all but slain himself, he fell.

So all day long the noise of battle rolled
Among the mountains by the winter sea;
Until King Arthur's Table, man by man,
Had fall'n in Lyonnesse about their lord,
King Arthur. Then, because his wound was deep,
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,

A broken chancel with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren land:
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
"The sequel of to-day unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep
They sleep — the men I loved. I think that we
Shall never more, at any future time,
Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
Walking about the gardens and the halls
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
I perish by this people which I made, —
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again
To rule once more; but, let what will be, be,
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
That without help I cannot last till morn.
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
Which was my pride: for thou rememberest how
In those old days, one summer noon, an arm
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
Holding the sword — and how I rowed across
And took it, and have worn it, like a king;
And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In aftertime, this also shall be known:
But now delay not: take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere;
Watch what thou seëst, and lightly bring me word."

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:
"It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus,
Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm —
A little thing may harm a wounded man;
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word."

So saying, from the ruined shrine he stept,
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down
By zigzag paths and juts of pointed rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt;
For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
Of subtlest jewelry. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled as he stood,
This way and that dividing the swift mind,
In act to throw: but at the last it seemed
Better to leave Excalibur concealed
There in the many-knotted water-flags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
So strode he back slow to the wounded King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
"Hast thou performed my mission which I gave?
What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag."

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale:
"Thou hast betrayed thy nature and thy name,
Not rendering true answer, as beseemed
Thy fëalty, nor like a noble knight;
For surer sign had followed, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.

This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again,
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me word."

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, fixed in thought;
But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased, he smote
His palms together, and he cried aloud:

"And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost for ever from the earth,
Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.
What good should follow this, if this were done?
What harm, undone? Deep harm to disobey,
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.
Were it well to obey then, if a king demand
An act unprofitable, against himself?
The King is sick, and knows not what he does.
What record or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
And rumors of a doubt? But were this kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,
Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying: 'King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps
Upon the hidden bases of the hills.'
So might some old man speak in the aftertime
To all the people, winning reverence.
But now much honor and much fame were lost."

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,
And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily:
"What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds."

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath:
"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!
Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widowed of the power in his eye
That bowed the will. I see thee what thou art,
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence:
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands."

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged
Among the bulrush beds, and clutched the sword,
And strongly wheeled and threw it. The great brand
Made lightnings in the splendor of the moon,
And flashing round and round, and whirled in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter shock
By night, with noises of the Northern Sea.
So flashed and fell the brand Excalibur;
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
And caught him by the hilt, and brandished him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.
And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath:
"Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out: what is it thou hast heard, or seen?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.
Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him;
But when I looked again, behold an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
That caught him by the hilt, and brandished him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere."

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard:
"My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I were gone.
Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
And bear me to the margin; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die."

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not words;
Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,
O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.

But, as he walked, King Arthur panted hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sighed the King,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear, "Quick, quick!
I fear it is too late, and I shall die."
But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,

Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walked,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
Before. His own thought drove him like a goad.
Dry clashed his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clanged round him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armèd heels —
And on a sudden, lo, the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon!

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately forms,
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream — by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold: and from them rose
A cry that shivered to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmured Arthur, "Place me in the barge."
So to the barge they came. There those three Queens
Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.
But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shattered casque, and chafed his hands,
And called him by his name, complaining loud,
And dropping bitter tears against a brow
Striped with dark blood: for all his face was white
And colorless, and like the withered moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;
And all his greaves and cuisses dashed with drops
Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls —
That made his forehead like a rising sun

High from the daïs-throne — were parched with dust,
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mixt with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.
So like a shattered column lay the King;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere:
"Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?
For now I see the true old times are dead,
When every morning brought a noble chance,
And every chance brought out a noble knight.
Such times have been not since the light that led
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
But now the whole Round Table is dissolved
Which was an image of the mighty world,
And I, the last, go forth companionless,
And the days darken round me, and the years,
Among new men, strange faces, other minds."

And slowly answered Arthur from the barge:
"The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?
I have lived my life, and that which I have done
May He within himself make pure! but thou,
If thou shouldst never see my face again,
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?

For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
But now farewell. I am going a long way
With these thou seëst — if indeed I go —
For all my mind is clouded with a doubt —
To the island-valley of Avilion;
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard lawns
And bowery hollows crowned with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Looked one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.

But when that moan had passed for evermore,
The stillness of the dead world's winter dawn
Amazed him, and he groaned, "The King is gone."
And therewithal came on him the weird rhyme,
"From the great deep to the great deep he goes."

Whereat he slowly turned and slowly clomb
The last hard footstep of that iron crag;
Thence marked the black hull moving yet, and cried,
"He passes to be King among the dead,
And after healing of his grievous wound
He comes again; but — if he come no more —
O me, be yon dark Queens in yon black boat,
Who shrieked and wailed, the three whereat we gazed
On that high day, when, clothed with living light,
They stood before his throne in silence, friends
Of Arthur, who should help him at his need?"

Then from the dawn it seemed there came, but faint
As from beyond the limit of the world,
Like the last echo born of a great cry,
Sounds, as if some fair city were one voice
Around a king returning from his wars.

Thereat once more he moved about, and clomb
Ev'n to the highest he could climb, and saw,
Straining his eyes beneath an arch of hand,
Or thought he saw, the speck that bare the King,
Down that long water opening on the deep
Somewhere far off, pass on and on, and go
From less to less and vanish into light.
And the new sun rose bringing the new year.

6. THE VICTORIAN AGE: COMPLETION OF THE ROMANTIC MOVEMENT

Those who cease their reading of English poetry with Tennyson and his immediate contemporaries close the book before it is done. One of the most inspiriting and marvellous chapters is that written by ROSSETTI, MORRIS, and SWINBURNE. It was their glory to round out the Romantic movement. The student will recall how this movement had originated, during the second half of the eighteenth century, in a reassertion of the poetic values of passion, imagination, love of nature, and variety of metrical form,—all of which were in disrepute during the age of reason and wit. James Thomson, Gray, Goldsmith, Cowper, Crabbe, Blake, Lamb, and Burns had all contributed in one way or another to this revival. With the appearance of the *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798, the Romantic movement had realized itself and its aim. Then followed the work of Wordsworth and Coleridge, Scott and Southey, Shelley, Byron, and Keats, and the other early nineteenth century Romanticists; English poetry was vocal with new measures, expressing splendidly and vigorously a new imaginative sense of man and nature. In the Victorian Age Tennyson had added a further grace of diction, a new sweetness of music, a surpassing loveliness of image and description to a poetry already amazingly rich. But now diction, music, and theme were to experience still another impetus. The movement started by Rossetti, promoted by Morris, and completed by Swinburne invigorated the language of poetry at a

time when Tennyson and his followers, always melodious, were repeating their pet words and phrases and becoming vapid and conventional. "It did again what Tennyson had done in his early prime. It dared to use simple and direct words, which it infused with new and audacious charm." Here Swinburne and Morris contributed as much or more than Rossetti. But in the second contribution — that of a more varied and richer music — Swinburne is supreme. By him especially were verbal melody and harmony, which Tennyson had brought apparently to their highest pitch, so elaborated that no succeeding poet has equalled him in this respect.

From its innovation in theme, or matter, this culminating movement takes its distinctive name, — Pre-Raphaelite. The origin of the name explains the nature of the innovation. In 1848 at the Royal Academy Rossetti made the acquaintance of two fellow students of painting, Holman Hunt and John Millais. A friendship sprang up which was to have a vast influence not only upon the careers of all three but upon the future of English art and indirectly upon that of poetry. These youths shared a common dislike for the dominating school in English painting. It seemed to them insincere: pretentious or sentimental in conception and imitative in technique. Even the portraits by the great Sir Joshua Reynolds they condemned as lacking in imaginative originality and fidelity to fact. "In the designs of Blake alone, whom they were the first to appreciate at his true worth," Rossetti and his friends "discerned a poetical imagination and an independent spirit at work." One night at Millais' house they were looking at a book of engravings of early Italian painters whose work, though not in itself of transcendent or even acknowledged worth, seemed to them to have the valuable merit of freshness and independence. These medieval painters of the time before Raphael had the qualities these young Victorian artists were striving for: simplicity, naturalness, and sincerity; wonder, reverence, and awe; originality of design and of imaginative interpretation; an unspoiled devotion to their art and a deep, spiritual enjoyment in creating beauty. In the autumn of 1848 the three friends and some of their associates in painting, sculpture, and criticism formed a Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood to further the advance of their tenets in art and a revolt against the conventionality of the reigning school.

As an art, poetry was soon included in the movement; and though the primary object of the Brotherhood was the revival not so much of the subjects as the inspiration of the medieval artists, yet the one tended to include the other. Nor was this emphasis upon themes

drawn from the past uncongenial to Romanticism. We have seen how a similar interest colors the poetry of Gray, Blake, Scott, Coleridge, Keats, and Tennyson. Among other sources of inspiration those poets had, moreover, drawn largely from the Middle Ages. But to the medievalism of the early romanticists the new poets added a sincerity, naturalness, and reverential beauty to which their forerunners had rarely attained, and for the attainment of which the Pre-Raphaelite school was founded. In the paintings of Rossetti, Holman Hunt, and Burne-Jones these qualities are preëminent, and in Rossetti's *Blessed Damozel* they appear in the form of poetry. He, indeed, was head and front of the school. From him both Morris and Swinburne caught something of the inspiration of this spiritualized medievalism. Rossetti and his followers gave reality to the remoteness and shadowiness of medieval subjects. They made the past seem real by treating it as if it had the life of the present.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI (1828–1882)

Rossetti's poetry is not dominated by any creed, not even by that of the Pre-Raphaelites. In art he shaped the movement more than he was shaped by it. In his poetry characteristics of its method appear in the draft of *The Blessed Damozel* written before the Brotherhood was formed. The medieval impulse is there and so too is the pictorial element. These and the mystical quality and the naturalness are all to be found in *The Portrait* and in other early poems. His mysticism and his inclination to supernatural motive and atmosphere derive from his familiarity with the Italian poets — especially Dante — and with Coleridge, Keats, and Blake, and from the dreamy, religious spirit of his family. The Pre-Raphaelites also demanded precision of detail — almost realism. But Rossetti's details are not mechanical; he has seen them with the eye of imagination and suffused them with feeling. His combination of the dramatic and romantic in narrative verse may be traced in part to early English ballads. The descriptive quality and the sensuous imagery of his poetry owe more to Keats — to poems like *The Eve of St. Agnes* — than to any other source. He worshipped human loveliness, but he says it is "as nought if not ennobled by the concurrence of the soul at all times." The art of Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, and Tennyson contributed to the music of his verse, especially his lyrical verse. But in variety of rhythmic movement, the melodious sequence of vowel and consonant sounds, and the harmony of echoing rhyme, both he and Swin-

burne, who owed much to him, have frequently surpassed their masters and have not yet been improved upon.

Of his ballads the noblest and most dramatic is *Sister Helen*, of which the original version was written when he was about twenty-three; the most characteristic is *Rose Mary*. *The White Ship* and *The King's Tragedy* are vivid and vigorous. These and other poems, such as *My Sister's Sleep*, *The Portrait*, *Mary's Girlhood*, and *The Burden of Nineveh*, will be enjoyed by lovers of poetry.

1828–1848. — Rossetti was born in London, May 12, 1828. His father, an Italian patriot who had been driven from his country, was professor of Italian in King's College, London, a scholar in medieval life and letters, and something of a poet. He reared his children in an atmosphere of poetry and mystical religion. They were all gifted with literary and artistic ability: Christina's name stands high among the women poets of England, and William's among the critics of literature and the fine arts. Dante Gabriel left school at the age of fifteen to devote himself to painting. During his early manhood, indeed, he was better known as a painter than as a poet, though many of his best poems were written and others begun before he was thirty-five. He completed the first draft of *The Blessed Damozel* in his nineteenth year, when he had already fallen captive to Coleridge, Shelley, and Keats. But Keats remained always his chosen poet, and his favorite poem was *La Belle Dame sans Merci*. Browning, too, he passionately enjoyed for a while. Of his reading of Poe something is said in the Notes.

1848–1870. — We have already told the story of Rossetti's share in forming the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in 1848. Between 1850 and 1860 he devoted himself principally to painting, but in 1856 both he and Morris published poems in *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*. Among Rossetti's contributions were *The Burden of Nineveh* and a second version of *The Blessed Damozel*. In 1860 he married Elizabeth Eleanor Siddal, a delicate and very beautiful girl who had for ten years been his inspiration in both poetry and painting. In 1862 she died. Rossetti was broken-hearted and he buried with her the manuscript of his poems, including the first draft of a sonnet sequence, *The House of Life*, which immortalizes their love. In 1870 the manuscript was disinterred and the poems were published in the same year, — his first volume of printed verse.

1870–1882. — After the death of his wife Rossetti had removed to a house in Chelsea, No. 16, Cheyne Walk. There, for some years, his brother William and Swinburne and Meredith lived with him.

This was his home for the rest of his life, though for a year or two he was joint-tenant with William Morris of a country house at Kelmscott. His sorrow for the loss of his wife was never assuaged; he was much of a recluse, and his health failed rapidly. In 1881 appeared his *Ballads and Sonnets*. On April 9 of the following year he died, attended to the last by his brother and several friends, among whom was the poet, Edmund Gosse.

THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

The blessèd damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of Heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn;
Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Her seemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
. . . Yet now, and in this place,
Surely she leaned o'er me — her hair
Fell all about my face. . . .
Nothing: the autumn fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is Space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met
'Mid deathless love's acclaims,
Spoke evermore among themselves
Their heart-remembered names;
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped
Out of the circling charm;
Until her bosom must have made
The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw
Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove
Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon
Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
She spoke through the still weather.

Her voice was like the voice the stars
Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,
Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be hearkened? When those bells
Possessed the mid-day air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side
Down all the echoing stair?)

"I wish that he were come to me,
For he will come," she said.
"Have I not prayed in Heaven? — on earth,
Lord, Lord, has he not prayed?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
And shall I feel afraid?

"When round his head the aureole clings,
And he is clothed in white,
I'll take his hand and go with him
To the deep wells of light;
As unto a stream we will step down,
And bathe there in God's sight.

"We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually
With prayer sent up to God;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.

"We two will lie i' the shadow of
That living mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His Name audibly.

" And I myself will teach to him,
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here; which his voice
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
Or some new thing to know."

(Alas! We two, we two, thou say'st!
Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
Was but its love for thee?)

" We two," she said, " will seek the groves
Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret and Rosalys.

" Circlewise sit they, with bound locks
And foreheads garlanded;
Into the fine cloth white like flame
Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robes for them
Who are just born, being dead.

" He shall fear, haply, and be dumb:
Then will I lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
Not once abashed or weak:
And the dear Mother will approve
My pride, and let me speak.

" Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
To Him round whom all souls

Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads
Bowed with their aureoles:
And angels meeting us shall sing
To their citherns and citoles.

"There will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for him and me: —
Only to live as once on earth
With Love, only to be,
As then awhile, forever now
Together, I and he."

She gazed and listened and then said,
Less sad of speech than mild, —
"All this is when he comes." She ceased.
The light thrilled towards her, filled
With angels in strong level flight.
Her eyes prayed, and she smiled.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path
Was vague in distant spheres:
And then she cast her arms along
The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

WILLIAM MORRIS (1834–1896)

Among modern English poets William Morris is the master of metrical romance. His particular forte lies not so much in the dramatic realization of character, situation, and plot — though this is present in sufficient degree — but rather in presenting a romantic story of the past, especially of the Middle Ages, as a series of alluring pictures in a haze of dreamy beauty. "His poetry deals, it is true, with the human passions, but the emotion is always seen as in a picture; he is more concerned with the attitude of the group than with the realization of a character." He was greatly influenced by the Pre-Raphaelite Movement and, though he was not a member of the Brotherhood, he was even more observant of the sights and

sounds and moods of nature than was Rossetti, more careful of detail, more of a pictorial poet, because he regarded nature as an essential background to his portrayal of human beauty and passion. He loved " the kindly and gracious earth " and he interweaves that love with his love of human romance and tragedy. In his first volume of verse, *The Defence of Guenevere and Other Poems*, though the craftsmanship is still immature, the narrative vision, the sympathy with what is vital in the romance of the Middle Ages, the pictorial imagination, and the spontaneity of utterance are evidence of genius. The simplicity and the pathos of the human interest, the sensitiveness to the color and form of natural beauty in the *Guenevere*, and the grimness of detail in *The Haystack in the Flood*, mark the advent of the master. In his greatest romances, *The Life and Death of Jason* and *The Earthly Paradise*, his acknowledged model was Chaucer. But in these old stories retold Chaucer influences the form rather than the mood. Like his model Morris tells a good tale for the delight that fiction gives, but in reproducing the manners of the past he is never forgetful of the serious issues and the sadness that in all ages temper the brief sweetness of life. In theme and treatment the narrative in these two great works is in places not only serious but epical. The epical quality is predominant in his last and noblest poem, *Sigurd the Volsung and the Fall of the Niblungs*. The verse and the imagery are superb; the narrative movement vigorous; the moral conception and the tragic outcome not only true to the medieval sources, but of profound spiritual import for our modern age. Throughout Morris' work runs a protest against the crass commercialism of modern industry that crushes the individual's delight in his handicraft and leaves him no time to " invite his soul." This protest and the dreamy, pictorial beauty of which we have spoken are evident in the *Apology* printed below. The easy, swinging rhythms and the manly simplicity of *The Writing on the Image*, and its picturesque quality, carry a natural appeal. But for a full illustration of Morris' poetical qualities recourse should be had to the series of poems mentioned above.

1834–1856. — Morris was born at Walthamstow, near London, March 24, 1834, of a well-to-do family. He was always a prodigious reader. At four he knew most of the Waverley novels; at about six he was particularly interested in the *Arabian Nights*, and at school he discovered the charm of medieval literature. In 1853 he entered Exeter College, Oxford, where he made the acquaintance of Edward Burne-Jones, who taught him to appreciate Chaucer and Malory's *Morte Darthur* and northern mythology and epic. In 1855 a few

students of congenial tastes formed a society called the Brotherhood, — a name apparently suggested by the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. The next year Morris and Burne-Jones met Rossetti, by whose poetry they had already been attracted. They were carried off their feet by Rossetti's influence. Morris had founded at his own expense the *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*, which ran for twelve numbers. Rossetti contributed to it, as we have seen, and here Morris published his first poems and prose stories. They are juvenile in technique but they manifest his fondness for the archaic and the picturesque, and the prose stories catch the spirit of medieval life.

1856–1877. — With a view to a profession he had meanwhile, in 1856, entered upon the study of architecture at an office in Oxford, but at Rossetti's advice he now gave up architecture and began painting under the poet-painter's guidance. In 1858 appeared his first volume of verse, *The Defence of Guenevere and other Poems*, noticed above. The next year he married Jane Burden, a beautiful Oxford girl who had been the model for much of his painting and whose face, like that of Mrs. Rossetti, appears in many of the paintings of the Pre-Raphaelite school. Two years later he began to apply his taste and his knowledge of art to practical uses by establishing a firm of art-decorators. This enterprise he promoted with great success until his death. The Morris reforms in interior decoration did more than any other agency to dispel tasteless ornament and ugly furniture from British and American homes. But Morris continued to write. *The Life and Death of Jason* (1867) and the collection of beautiful romances known as *The Earthly Paradise* (1868–1870) established his supremacy as a poet of metrical romance. *Sigurd the Volsung* appeared in 1876.

1877–1896. — Morris now became interested in Socialism. His literary efforts for the next ten years were largely directed against the commercialism of the age in a deliberate attempt to "set the crooked straight" by the introduction of sweeping social and industrial reforms. The best known of his poetic contributions to the cause is his *Chants for Socialists*. Of his prose romances on the same subject and of those on medieval life we have not space to write, nor of his verse translations of the *Aeneid* and the *Odyssey*. All are of high artistic worth. Eventually he was discouraged by the impatience of the extreme socialists and devoted much time to initiating and developing a revival in the art of printing. At Kelmscott, his country home, he set up a private printing-press from which he issued many books exquisite in typography and binding. On October 3, 1896, he died, —

leaving behind him a life-story of indomitable energy and multifarious activity, as romantically picturesque as his own poetry, paintings, and designs. All that he had touched had been transmuted into beauty.

AN APOLOGY

(*From The Earthly Paradise*)

Of Heaven or Hell I have no power to sing,
I cannot ease the burden of your fears,
Or make quick-coming death a little thing,
Or bring again the pleasure of past years,
Nor for my words shall ye forget your tears,
Or hope again for aught that I can say,
The idle singer of an empty day.

But rather, when aweary of your mirth,
From full hearts still unsatisfied ye sigh,
And, feeling kindly unto all the earth,
Grudge every minute as it passes by,
Made the more mindful that the sweet days die,
Remember me a little then, I pray,
The idle singer of an empty day.

The heavy trouble, the bewildering care
That weighs us down who live and earn our bread,
These idle verses have no power to bear;
So let me sing of names rememberèd,
Because they, living not, can ne'er be dead,
Or long time take their memory quite away
From us poor singers of an empty day.

Dreamer of dreams, born out of my due time,
Why should I strive to set the crooked straight?
Let it suffice me that my murmuring rhyme
Beats with light wing against the ivory gate,
Telling a tale not too importunate

To those who in the sleepy region stay,
Lulled by the singer of an empty day.

Folk say, a wizard to a northern king
At Christmas-tide such wondrous things did show,
That through one window men beheld the spring,
And through another saw the summer glow,
And through a third the fruited vines a-row,
While still, unheard, but in its wonted way,
Piped the drear wind of that December day.

So with this Earthly Paradise it is,
If ye will read aright, and pardon me,
Who strive to build a shadowy isle of bliss
Midmost the beating of the steely sea,
Where tossed about all hearts of men must be;
Whose ravening monsters mighty men shall slay,
Not the poor singer of an empty day.

THE WRITING ON THE IMAGE

(*From The Earthly Paradise*)

Argument

How on an Image that stood anciently in Rome were written certain words, which none understood, until a Scholar, coming there, knew their meaning, and thereby discovered great marvels, but withal died miserably.

In half-forgotten days of old,
As by our fathers we were told,
Within the town of Rome there stood
An image cut of cornel wood,
And on the upraised hand of it
Men might behold these letters writ —
"PERCUTE HIC:" which is to say,
In that tongue that we speak to-day,
"*Strike here!*" nor yet did any know
The cause why this was written so.

Thus in the middle of the square,
In the hot sun and summer air,
The snow-drift and the driving rain,
That image stood, with little pain,
For twice a hundred years and ten;
While many a band of striving men
Were driven betwixt woe and mirth
Swiftly across the weary earth,
From nothing unto dark nothing:
And many an Emperor and King,
Passing with glory or with shame,
Left little record of his name,
And no remembrance of the face
Once watched with awe for gifts or grace.
Fear little, then, I counsel you,
What any son of man can do;
Because a log of wood will last
While many a life of man goes past,
And all is over in short space.

Now so it chanced that to this place
There came a man of Sicily,
Who when the image he did see,
Knew full well who, in days of yore,
Had set it there; for much strange lore,
In Egypt and in Babylon,
This man with painful toil had won;
And many secret things could do;
So verily full well he knew
That master of all sorcery
Who wrought the thing in days gone by,
And doubted not that some great spell
It guarded, but could nowise tell
What it might be. So, day by day,
Still would he loiter on the way,
And watch the image carefully,
Well mocked of many a passer-by.
And on a day he stood and gazed
Upon the slender finger, raised

Against a doubtful cloudy sky,
Nigh noontide; and thought, "Certainly
The master who made thee so fair
By wondrous art, had not stopped there,
But made thee speak, had he not thought
That thereby evil might be brought
Upon his spell." But as he spoke,
From out a cloud the noon sun broke
With watery light and shadows cold:
Then did the Scholar well behold
How, from that finger carved to tell
Those words, a short black shadow fell
Upon a certain spot of ground,
And thereon, looking all around
And seeing none heeding, went straightway
Whereas the finger's shadow lay,
And with his knife about the place
A little circle did he trace;
Then home he turned with throbbing head
And forthright gat him to his bed,
And slept until the night was late
And few men stirred from gate to gate.
So when at midnight he did wake,
Pickaxe and shovel did he take,
And, going to that now silent square,
He found the mark his knife made there,
And quietly with many a stroke
The pavement of the place he broke:
And so, the stones being set apart,
He 'gan to dig with beating heart,
And from the hole in haste he cast
The marl and gravel; till at last,
Full shoulder high, his arms were jarred,
For suddenly his spade struck hard
With clang against some metal thing:
And soon he found a brazen ring,
All green with rust, twisted, and great
As a man's wrist, set in a plate

Of copper, wrought all curiously
With words unknown though plain to see,
Spite of the rust; and flowering trees,
And beasts, and wicked images,
Whereat he shuddered: for he knew
What ill things he might come to do,
If he should still take part with these
And that Great Master strive to please.
But small time had he then to stand
And think, so straight he set his hand
Unto the ring, but where he thought
That by main strength it must be brought
From out its place, lo! easily
It came away, and let him see
A winding staircase wrought of stone,
Wherethrough the new-come wind did moan.
Then thought he, "If I come alive
From out this place well shall I thrive,
For I may look here certainly
The treasures of a king to see,
A mightier man than men are now.
So in few days what man shall know
The needy Scholar, seeing me
Great in the place where great men be,
The richest man in all the land?
Beside the best then shall I stand,
And some unheard-of palace have;
And if my soul I may not save
In heaven, yet here in all men's eyes
Will I make some sweet paradise,
With marble cloisters, and with trees
And bubbling wells, and fantasies,
And things all men deem strange and rare,
And crowds of women kind and fair,
That I may see, if so I please,
Laid on the flowers, or mid the trees
With half-clad bodies wandering.
There, dwelling happier than the King,

What lovely days may yet be mine!
How shall I live with love and wine,
And music, till I come to die!
And then — Who knoweth certainly
What haps to us when we are dead?
Truly I think by likelihead
Nought haps to us of good or bad;
Therefore on earth will I be glad
A short space, free from hope or fear;
And fearless will I enter here
And meet my fate, whatso it be."

Now on his back a bag had he,
To bear what treasure he might win,
And therewith now did he begin
To go adown the winding stair;
And found the walls all painted fair
With images of many a thing,
Warrior and priest, and queen and king,
But nothing knew what they might be.
Which things full clearly could he see,
For lamps were hung up here and there
Of strange device, but wrought right fair,
And pleasant savor came from them.
At last a curtain, on whose hem
Unknown words in red gold were writ,
He reached, and softly raising it
Stepped back, for now did he behold
A goodly hall hung round with gold,
And at the upper end could see
Sitting, a glorious company:
Therefore he trembled, thinking well
They were no men, but fiends of hell.
But while he waited, trembling sore,
And doubtful of his late-learned lore,
A cold blast of the outer air
Blew out the lamps upon the stair
And all was dark behind him; then

Did he fear less to face those men
Than, turning round, to leave them there
While he went groping up the stair.
Yea, since he heard no cry or call
Or any speech from them at all,
He doubted they were images
Set there some dying king to please
By that Great Master of the art;
Therefore at last with stouter heart
He raised the cloth and entered in
In hope that happy life to win,
And drawing nigher did behold
That these were bodies dead and cold
Attirèd in full royal guise,
And wrought by art in such a wise
That living they all seemed to be,
Whose very eyes he well could see,
That now beheld not foul or fair,
Shining as though alive they were.
And midmost of that company
An ancient king that man could see,
A mighty man, whose beard of grey
A foot over his gold gown lay;
And next beside him sat his queen
Who in a flowery gown of green
And golden mantle well was clad,
And on her neck a collar had
Too heavy for her dainty breast;
Her loins by such a belt were prest
That whoso in his treasury
Held that alone, a king might be.
On either side of these, a lord
Stood heedfully before the board,
And in their hands held bread and wine
For service; behind these did shine
The armor of the guards, and then
The well-attirèd serving-men,
The minstrels clad in raiment meet;

And over against the royal seat
Was hung a lamp, although no flame
Was burning there, but there was set
Within its open golden fret
A huge carbuncle, red and bright;
Wherefrom there shone forth such a light
That great hall was as clear by it,
As though by wax it had been lit,
As some great church at Easter-tide.
  Now set a little way aside,
Six paces from the daïs stood
An image made of brass and wood,
In likeness of a full-armed knight
Who pointed 'gainst the ruddy light
A huge shaft ready in a bow.
  Pondering how he could come to know
What all these marvellous matters meant,
About the hall the Scholar went,
Trembling, though nothing moved as yet;
And for awhile did he forget
The longings that had brought him there
In wondering at these marvels fair;
And still for fear he doubted much
One jewel of their robes to touch.

  But as about the hall he passed
He grew more used to them at last,
And thought, "Swiftly the time goes by,
And now no doubt the day draws nigh;
Folk will be stirring: by my head
A fool I am to fear the dead,
Who have seen living things enow,
Whose very names no man can know,
Whose shapes brave men might well affright
More than the lion in the night
Wandering for food." Therewith he drew
Unto those royal corpses two,
That on dead brows still wore the crown;

And midst the golden cups set down
The rugged wallet from his back,
Patched of strong leather, brown and black.
Then, opening wide its mouth, took up
From off the board a golden cup
The King's dead hand was laid upon,
Whose unmoved eyes upon him shone
And recked no more of that last shame
Than if he were the beggar lame,
Who in old days was wont to wait
For a dog's meal beside the gate.
Of which shame nought our man did reck,
But laid his hand upon the neck
Of the slim Queen, and thence undid
The jeweled collar, that straight slid
Down her smooth bosom to the board.
And when these matters he had stored
Safe in his sack, with both their crowns,
The jeweled parts of their rich gowns,
Their shoes and belts, brooches and rings,
And cleared the board of all rich things,
He staggered with them down the hall.
But as he went his eyes did fall
Upon a wonderful green stone,
Upon the hall-floor laid alone;
He said, " Though thou art not so great
To add by much unto the weight
Of this my sack indeed, yet thou,
Certes, would make me rich enow,
That verily with thee I might
Wage one-half of the world to fight
The other half of it, and I
The lord of all the world might die; —
I will not leave thee." Therewithal
He knelt down midmost of the hall,
Thinking it would come easily
Into his hand; but when that he
Gat hold of it, full fast it stack,

So fuming, down he laid his sack,
And with both hands pulled lustily;
But as he strained, he cast his eye
Back to the daïs; there he saw
The bowman image 'gin to draw
The mighty bowstring to his ear;
So, shrieking out aloud for fear,
Of that rich stone he loosed his hold
And catching up his bag of gold,
Gat to his feet: but ere he stood
The evil thing of brass and wood
Up to his ear the notches drew;
And clanging, forth the arrow flew
And midmost of the carbuncle,
Clanging again, the forked barbs fell,
And all was dark as pitch straightway.

So there until the judgment day
Shall come and find his bones laid low,
And raise them up for weal or woe,
This man must bide; cast down he lay
While all his past life day by day
In one short moment he could see
Drawn out before him, while that he
In terror by that fatal stone
Was laid, and scarcely dared to moan.
But in a while his hope returned,
And then, though nothing he discerned,
He gat him up upon his feet,
And all about the walls he beat
To find some token of the door,
But never could he find it more;
For by some dreadful sorcery
All was sealed close as it might be,
And midst the marvels of that hall
This Scholar found the end of all.

But in the town on that same night,
An hour before the dawn of light

Such storm upon the place there fell,
That not the oldest man could tell
Of such another: and thereby
The image was burnt utterly,
Being stricken from the clouds above;
And folk deemed that same bolt did move
The pavement where that wretched one
Unto his foredoomed fate had gone,
Because the plate was set again
Into its place, and the great rain
Washed the earth down, and sorcery
Had hid the place where it did lie.
So soon the stones were set all straight,
But yet the folk, afraid of fate,
Where once the man of cornel wood
Through many a year of bad and good
Had kept his place, set up alone
Great Jove himself, cut in white stone,
But thickly overlaid with gold.
"Which," saith my tale, "you may behold
Unto this day, although indeed
Some Lord or other, being in need,
Took every ounce of gold away."
But now, this tale in some past day
Being writ, I warrant all is gone,
Both gold and weather-beaten stone.

Be merry, masters, while ye may,
For men much quicker pass away.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE (1837–1909)

With Swinburne's *Atalanta in Calydon* (1865) we enter upon a new phase of the history of English verse. Although this poetic drama was modelled on the structure and dignified style of Greek tragedy, its choral songs were of a swiftness, richness, and romantic beauty utterly unlike the Greek and not surpassed by any lyric verse that England had yet known, — not even by that of Shelley, with

whom the enthusiastic critics at once compared the new poet. The inimitable Hymn to Artemis, on the youth of the year, which opens,

> When the hounds of spring are on winter's traces,
> The mother of months in meadow or plain
> Fills the shadows and windy places
> With lisp of leaves and ripples of rain —

was a music rapturous and strange, intoxicating with rhythms of unfamiliar cadence and with alliterations and assonances of which even Tennyson had never dreamed. Equally unexpected were the majestic measures and the relentless fatalism of the chorus, *The Making of Man* (given in our text). From this time on English poets have been busy emulating Swinburne's verbal music and experimenting with musical innovations of their own. His work made plain the possibility of new developments in verbal melody and harmony.

In the technique of verse, especially the lyrical, and in command of diction appropriate to every note in the poetical gamut, Swinburne has never been surpassed. His beauty and splendor of phrase, his vocabulary of vituperation as of adoration, his imagery of motion and color and sound are marvellous. His passion for physical beauty is extravagant; for religious and political freedom, sincere but turbulent. The attendant danger of such excellence is the sacrifice of sense to sound and image. And it must be admitted that though Swinburne's thought may be manifold and startling, its roots do not go deep; frequently the exuberance of his diction chokes whatever thought was growing. He captures the ear and the imagination but he does not always touch the heart.

1837–1862. — Swinburne was born in London, April 5, 1837, of a distinguished north of England family allied by marriage with the nobility. He went to Eton, and thence in 1857 to Balliol College, Oxford, about the time that Morris was leaving the University town. At school and college he read with avidity the Greek dramatists and Shakespeare, Shelley, and Victor Hugo. The love of liberty fed by these masters was especially stimulated by the last mentioned, whom he admired beyond measure. From Hugo and other living French poets he had already derived skill in poetic forms before he came into intimate relations with Rossetti and Morris. His first volume in verse, published in 1860, the year he left college, was dedicated to Rossetti. But the two dramatic poems which give the book its title,

The Queen Mother and *Rosamond*, are distinctly influenced by the language and poetic style of Shakespeare. In 1862 he was living, as we have elsewhere said, in the same house with Rossetti, Meredith, and Rossetti's brother William.

1862–1867. — In 1865 Swinburne leaped into fame with his *Atalanta in Calydon* and a romantic drama, *Chastelard*, the first part of a trilogy upon Mary, Queen of Scots. Next year appeared his *Poems and Ballads*, the frank paganism of which provoked a storm of criticism. But some of the work in that collection is irreproachable and exquisite: *The Garden of Proserpine* has the spirit of classical antiquity, the sadness and the timeless beauty of its creed; the *Hymn to Proserpine* is a phase of pagan philosophy at its best; *A Christmas Carol* is essentially medieval and reverential; *A Match* has all the freshness of innocence; the poem *To Victor Hugo* is the forerunner of the glorifications of liberty which were to characterize much of Swinburne's future lyric verse. In general the *Poems and Ballads* draw their inspiration from the French poets, but the manner and the medieval color and detail are a distinctive product of the Pre-Raphaelite school.

1867–1874. — The next year, 1867, stirred by the movement which aimed to complete the unification of Italy, Swinburne abandoned the poetry of sensuous appeal and poured out praises of the Italian patriots, Mazzini and Garibaldi. In 1871, still following the lead of his master, Victor Hugo, he published a volume entitled *Songs before Sunrise*, devoted primarily to the struggle which ended with the annexation of the Papal States to the Kingdom of Italy, and to the sad humiliation of France in the Franco-German war. On political subjects the finest poem is the lament for captive Italy, *Super Flumina Babylonis*. But the most impressive poems in the volume are those in which the poet enunciates his religion of humanity, such as *Prelude*, *Hertha*, *The Pilgrims*, and the *Hymn of Man*. His doctrine was that of Meredith, of which we have already spoken. In prose he had meanwhile written the first of his remarkable studies in criticism, an essay on William Blake.

1874–1909. — During these years Swinburne returned to fields which earlier he had begun to cultivate. He finished his trilogy of Scottish history with *Bothwell* and *Mary Stuart;* to his Greek tragedy he added *Erechtheus*. He applied himself again to the dramatic poem and produced one of the most melodious, passionate, and tragic romances in English literature, *Tristram of Lyonesse*. Meanwhile the influence of Hugo had been increasing, and in a second and third series

of *Poems and Ballads* he poured forth splendid song, principally of the beauty and brevity of all things mortal, of his passion for freedom and his love of the sea and of little children. Besides all this he wrote numerous prose studies in literary criticism, usually too immoderate in eulogy or in condemnation. With his death in 1909 and that of Meredith in the same year England lost the last of her elder Victorian poets. Their lives had spanned two-thirds of the nineteenth century and almost the first decade of the twentieth.

THE MAKING OF MAN

Before the beginning of years
  There came to the making of man
Time, with a gift of tears;
  Grief, with a glass that ran;
Pleasure, with pain for leaven;
  Summer, with flowers that fell;
Remembrance fallen from heaven,
  And madness risen from hell;
Strength without hands to smite;
  Love that endures for a breath;
Night, the shadow of light,
  And life, the shadow of death.

And the high gods took in hand
  Fire, and the falling of tears,
And a measure of sliding sand
  From under the feet of the years;
And froth and drift of the sea;
  And dust of the laboring earth;
And bodies of things to be
  In the houses of death and of birth;
And wrought with weeping and laughter,
  And fashioned with loathing and love,
With life before and after
  And death beneath and above,
For a day and a night and a morrow,
  That his strength might endure for a span

With travail and heavy sorrow,
The holy spirit of man.

From the winds of the north and the south
They gathered as unto strife;
They breathed upon his mouth,
They filled his body with life;
Eyesight and speech they wrought
For the veils of the soul therein,
A time for labor and thought,
A time to serve and to sin;
They gave him light in his ways,
And love, and a space for delight,
And beauty and length of days,
And night, and sleep in the night.
His speech is a burning fire;
With his lips he travaileth;
In his heart is a blind desire,
In his eyes foreknowledge of death;
He weaves, and is clothed with derision;
Sows, and he shall not reap;
His life is a watch or a vision
Between a sleep and a sleep.

THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE

Here, where the world is quiet;
Here, where all trouble seems
Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
In doubtful dreams of dreams;
I watch the green field growing
For reaping folk and sowing,
For harvest-time and mowing,
A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,
And men that laugh and weep;

Of what may come hereafter
For men that sow to reap:
I am weary of days and hours,
Blown buds of barren flowers,
Desires and dreams and powers,
And everything but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbor,
And far from eye or ear
Wan waves and wet winds labor,
Weak ships and spirits steer;
They drive adrift, and whither
They wot not who make thither;
But no such winds blow hither,
And no such things grow here.

No growth of moor or coppice,
No heather-flower or vine,
But bloomless buds of poppies,
Green grapes of Proserpine,
Pale beds of blowing rushes,
Where no leaf blooms or blushes
Save this whereout she crushes
For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,
In fruitless fields of corn,
They bow themselves and slumber
All night till light is born;
And like a soul belated,
In hell and heaven unmated,
By cloud and mist abated
Comes out of darkness morn.

Though one were strong as seven,
He too with death shall dwell,
Nor wake with wings in heaven,
Nor weep for pains in hell;

Though one were fair as roses,
His beauty clouds and closes;
And well though love reposes,
In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,
Crowned with calm leaves, she stands
Who gathers all things mortal
With cold immortal hands;
Her languid lips are sweeter
Than love's who fears to greet her,
To men that mix and meet her
From many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,
She waits for all men born;
Forgets the earth her mother,
The life of fruits and corn;
And spring and seed and swallow
Take wing for her, and follow
Where summer song rings hollow
And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither,
The old loves with wearier wings;
And all dead years draw thither,
And all disastrous things;
Dead dreams of days forsaken,
Blind buds that snows have shaken,
Wild leaves that winds have taken,
Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,
And joy was never sure;
To-day will die to-morrow;
Time stoops to no man's lure;
And love, grown faint and fretful,
With lips but half regretful

Sighs, and with eyes forgetful
Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,
From hope and fear set free,
We thank with brief thanksgiving
Whatever gods may be
That no life lives forever;
That dead men rise up never;
That even the weariest river
Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken,
Nor any change of light:
Nor sound of waters shaken,
Nor any sound or sight:
Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,
Nor days nor things diurnal;
Only the sleep eternal
In an eternal night.

7. THE VICTORIAN AGE: THE YOUNGER POETS

While Meredith, Rossetti, Morris, and Swinburne were in the full tide of their song, younger generations were practising notes of their own, and by the close of the century all of these younger or later Victorian poets had spoken distinctively. Of them we can mention here only a few. In the forties were born HENRY AUSTIN DOBSON, ANDREW LANG, ROBERT BRIDGES, EDMUND GOSSE, and WILLIAM E. HENLEY, — all of whom began the publication of substantial verse in the seventies. In the fifties were born ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON, JOHN DAVIDSON, WILLIAM WATSON, FRANCIS THOMPSON, and A. E. HOUSMAN, most of whom began to publish in the later seventies or in the eighties. Between 1865 and 1869 RUDYARD KIPLING, WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS, STEPHEN PHILLIPS, HENRY NEWBOLT, and LAWRENCE BINYON were born, — a group that overlaps the Victorian age proper and the succeeding Georgian era.

It is by no means easy to classify these poets by schools or movements or to generalize in respect of their contributions to English

poetry. They are too various to admit of the former and the time is not yet ripe for the latter. But a few tentative estimates and suggestions may not be out of place. To begin with, we must note that hardly ever before in the history of English literature has a period of equal length produced so much poetry of a uniformly high grade as that which appeared in the second half of the nineteenth century. But it is to be admitted that of all these younger poets none, with the possible exception of Rudyard Kipling, has been the equal of the greater Victorians, of Tennyson, Browning, Rossetti, Morris, or Swinburne. Moreover, much of their poetry has been bookish, "literary," in derivation and savor, though to this rule Henley, Davidson, Stevenson, Kipling, and Lawrence Binyon (of whose verse a specimen is presented under POEMS OF THE GREAT WAR, below) are exceptions. Poetry in this period has more often been an avocation than a vocation, the by-product of leisure rather than the avowed purpose of life or chief means of earning a livelihood. Physicians, journalists, librarians, philologists, historians, anthropologists, novelists, and clerks have indulged in poetic composition during their leisure, or men of independent income and sequestered existence have made it their occupation. Nevertheless the contributions and innovations of the younger Victorians have been abundant and significant.

In rhythm the experiments and discoveries of Rossetti and Swinburne were eagerly and continually followed up. By way of adaptation Dobson, Lang, Bridges, Gosse, Henley, and others in their suite have constructed out of Old French forms of verse graceful and adequate vehicles for social humors and gentle pathos; with less popular success, but with infinite skill, Robert Bridges has reshaped to English use many a classical metre. By way of invention Henley, Davidson, and others have varied with marked success the received and habitual movements of rhythm by resorting to artistically devised irregularities, often more apparent than actual. Sometimes, also, they have discarded standard metres and rhyme. Their method, growing in popularity and frequently misunderstood and misapplied, has become a distinguishing feature of the latest "New Poetry." Thus their experiment has passed into a revolt not yet justified by sanity.— In subject-matter the chief addition, since the resuscitation of eighteenth-century and classical subjects by the literary poets of the forties, has come from poets like Henley, Davidson, and Housman. In various ways they have elaborated phases of the religious philosophy of Swinburne and Meredith, or have brought the realities

of contemporary life and the new problems of industrial justice more vividly than ever before into the field of poetic treatment, thereby greatly extending that field and renovating the conception of what subjects have an affinity for poetic interpretation. New material has also been added by Yeats, with his revival of the mythology and other traditional lore of Ireland, and by Kipling, with his realistic poems of civil and military life in the British dependencies, his prophetic reading of political events, and his noble interpretation of the ideal of the higher imperialism, — its call for manliness and discipline and its burden of ministry to the true progress of the race. — Of mood the varieties are manifold. Here only four can be mentioned: the reminiscent and sometimes wistful tone, the quaint gayety and arch wit of the writers in the Old French forms and of the gentle and rarely distinctive Robert Louis Stevenson; the serene and dignified aspect of such classicists as Robert Bridges and Sir William Watson, and of Stephen Phillips at his best; the spirit of flaming revolt with which Henley, Davidson, and others confronted industrial, economic, and social conventions which they regarded as antiquated and debasing; and the all-absorbing fervor of a religious mysticism that rises above the practical consideration of economic problems, as in Francis Thompson's *Hound of Heaven.* — In manner the foremost innovations have been a revolt against the conventional poetic diction of the past, the use of language glowing from the mint of colloquial speech, and the impressionistic handling of concrete details to epitomize or suggest the essential in character, setting, and situation (Henley, Davidson, Kipling, and others). Nor should we neglect to mention the magical and dreamy atmosphere, the lingering cadences, and the graceful diction of William Butler Yeats and his followers in Anglo-Celtic poetry.

HENRY AUSTIN DOBSON (1840–)

Henry Austin Dobson was born at Plymouth, January 18, 1840. Educated partly in France, at an early and impressionable period he learned something of that French grace, gayety, and precision which distinguish his work in prose and verse. At sixteen he obtained a clerkship in the Board of Trade, where for nearly forty-five years he served industriously, rising at length to a principalship in the harbor-department. He retired in 1901.

From the grind and monotony of office work, which reduces an ordinary mind to sterility, Mr. Dobson has found relief in the composi-

tion of poems which for fascinating freshness of form, delicacy of phrase, sweetness of spirit, and exquisiteness of point and finish have rarely been surpassed. His mind plays happily with images of old-world charm or present-day vivacity. Under his deft touch Dresden shepherdesses come to life, Watteau's marquises again flaunt their brocades, old love letters give up their secrets; or, with sportive humor or exquisite pathos, he casts a veil of loveliness over episodes of to-day, — a flirtation in the train, the collapse of a child musician, the irony of the inscription above a forgotten grave. Of his diction one critic says, "The epithet is usually so just that it seems to have come into being with the noun it qualifies, the metaphor is usually so appropriate that it leaves one in doubt as to whether it suggested the poem or the poem suggested it, the verb is seldom in excess of the idea it would convey, the effect is that 'something has here got itself uttered,' and that once for all." His "old world" is the world of the English Restoration and the period of Queen Anne. From Horace, from the *vers de société* of Matthew Prior (1664–1721) and of the nineteenth-century Praed and Locker, as well as from the quaint verse-forms of old French poetry which had been revived by Alfred de Musset (d. 1857) and Théodore de Banville (d. 1891) — the forms in which Villon, and other French poets of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries had written — Mr. Dobson has derived something of his manner. He has, indeed, as we have already noted, been largely instrumental in introducing into English poetry the old French triolet, ballade, rondel, rondeau, and villanelle. His *Vignettes in Rhyme* (1873), *Proverbs in Porcelain* (1877), and his later volumes, and an article in the *Cornhill Magazine* of July, 1877, by Mr. Edmund Gosse, *A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse*, drew attention in delightful way to the possibilities for English verse that lay in those forms, and the younger poets at once set themselves to compose after their charming patterns.

Other works by Mr. Dobson are his *Old-World Idylls* (1883) and *At the Sign of the Lyre* (1885). His *Poems on Several Occasions* were published in New York in 1889 (Dodd, Mead & Co.), and his *Collected Poems* in London, 1897 (9th ed. 1914. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co.). Everything that he has written claims the reader's interest, but special mention may be made of *Incognita* (an episode in the train), *A Dead Letter*, *The Ballad of "Beau-Brocade,"* *A Gentlewoman of the Old School*, *The Old Sedan Chair*, *Molly Trefusis*, *Before Sedan*, *A Nightingale in Kensington Gardens*, and *In After Days*. The reader will soon discover that Mr. Dobson has not sung the greater preoccupations of the age: *majores majora sonent* is the motto he

modestly places on his title page; and, thinking of the years in the Board of Trade — which remind us of Charles Lamb's years in the India House — he says of himself

> Too low my lot for lofty deed;
> I pipe but fancies on a reed.

But these fancies go straight to the heart. They are the inimitably lovely and whimsical comments of a most gentle, endearing, and wise spirit.

GOOD-NIGHT, BABETTE!

"Si vieillesse pouvait!"

SCENE. — *A small neat Room. In a high Voltaire Chair sits a white-haired old Gentleman.*

MONSIEUR VIEUXBOIS BABETTE

M. VIEUXBOIS (*turning querulously*).

Day of my life! Where *can* she get?
BABETTE! I say! BABETTE! — BABETTE!

BABETTE (*entering hurriedly*).

Coming, M'sieu'! If M'sieu' speaks
So loud, he won't be well for weeks!

M. VIEUXBOIS.

Where have you been?

BABETTE.

Why; M'sieu' knows: —
April! . . . Ville d'Avray! . . . Ma'am'selle ROSE!

M. VIEUXBOIS.

Ah! I am old, — and I forget.
Was the place growing green, BABETTE?

BABETTE.

But of a greenness! — yes, M'sieu'!
And then the sky so blue! — so blue!
And when I dropped my *immortelle*,
How the birds sang!
(*Lifting her apron to her eyes.*)
This poor Ma'am'selle!

M. VIEUXBOIS.

You're a good girl, BABETTE, but she, —
She was an Angel, verily.
Sometimes I think I see her yet
Stand smiling by the cabinet;
And once, I know, she peeped and laughed
Betwixt the curtains. . . .
Where's the draught?

(*She gives him a cup.*)

Now I shall sleep, I think, BABETTE; —
Sing me your Norman *chansonnette*.

BABETTE (*sings*).

"*Once at the Angelus*
(*Ere I was dead*),
Angels all glorious
Came to my Bed;
Angels in blue and white
Crowned on the Head."

M. VIEUXBOIS (*drowsily*).

"She was an Angel" . . . "Once she laughed" . . .
What, was I dreaming?
Where's the draught?

BABETTE (*showing the empty cup*).

The draught, M'sieu'?

M. VIEUXBOIS.

How I forget!
I am so old! But sing, BABETTE!

BABETTE (*sings*),

"One was the Friend I left
Stark in the Snow;
One was the Wife that died
Long, — long ago;
One was the Love I lost . . .
How could she know?"

M. VIEUXBOIS (*murmuring*).

Ah, PAUL! . . . old PAUL! . . . EULALIE too!
And ROSE . . . And O! "the sky so blue!"

BABETTE (*sings*).

"One had my Mother's eyes,
Wistful and mild;
One had my Father's face;
One was a Child:
All of them bent to me, —
Bent down and smiled!"

(He is asleep!)

M. VIEUXBOIS (*almost inaudibly*).

"How I forget!"
"I am so old!" . . . "Good-night, BABETTE!"

THE CHILD-MUSICIAN

He had played for his lordship's levee,
He had played for her ladyship's whim,
Till the poor little head was heavy,
And the poor little brain would swim.

And the face grew peekèd and eerie,
  And the large eyes strange and bright,
And they said — too late — " He is weary!
  He shall rest for, at least, to-night! "

But at dawn, when the birds were waking,
  As they watched in the silent room,
With the sound of a strained cord breaking,
  A something snapped in the gloom.

'Twas the string of his violoncello,
  And they heard him stir in his bed: —
" Make room for a tired little fellow,
  Kind God! " — was the last that he said.

ESSAYS IN OLD FRENCH FORMS

ROSE CROSSED THE ROAD

(*Triolet*)

I intended an Ode,
  And it turned to a Sonnet.
It began *à la mode*,
I intended an Ode;
But Rose crossed the road
  In her latest new bonnet;
I intended an Ode;
  And it turned to a Sonnet.

THE WANDERER

(*Rondel*)

Love comes back to his vacant dwelling, —
  The old, old Love that we knew of yore!
We see him stand by the open door,
  With his great eyes sad, and his bosom swelling.

He makes as though in our arms repelling,
He fain would lie as he lay before; —
Love comes back to his vacant dwelling, —
The old, old Love that we knew of yore!

Ah, who shall help us from over-spelling
That sweet forgotten, forbidden lore!
E'en as we doubt in our heart once more,
With a rush of tears to our eyelids welling,
Love comes back to his vacant dwelling.

WITH PIPE AND FLUTE

(*Rondeau*)

With pipe and flute the rustic Pan
Of old made music sweet for man;
And wonder hushed the warbling bird,
And closer drew the calm-eyed herd, —
The rolling river slowlier ran.

Ah! would, — ah! would, a little span,
Some air of Arcady could fan
This age of ours, too seldom stirred
With pipe and flute!

But now for gold we plot and plan;
And from Beersheba unto Dan
Apollo's self might pass unheard,
Or find the night-jar's note preferred; —
Not so it fared, when time began,
With pipe and flute!

FOR A COPY OF THEOCRITUS

(*Villanelle*)

O Singer of the field and fold,
Theocritus! Pan's pipe was thine, —
Thine was the happier Age of Gold.

For thee the scent of new-turned mould,
The bee-hives, and the murmuring pine,
O Singer of the field and fold!

Thou sang'st the simple feasts of old, —
The beechen bowl made glad with wine . .
Thine was the happier Age of Gold.

Thou bad'st the rustic loves be told, —
Thou bad'st the tuneful reeds combine,
O Singer of the field and fold!

And round thee, ever-laughing, rolled
The blithe and blue Sicilian brine . .
Thine was the happier Age of Gold.

Alas for us! Our songs are cold;
Our Northern suns too sadly shine: —
O Singer of the field and fold,
Thine was the happier Age of Gold!

ANDREW LANG (1844–1912)

It has been said that Andrew Lang, the most versatile and one of the ablest writers of his day, wrote upon so many subjects that he could scarcely miss writing well on something. He was journalist, historian, anthropologist, philologist, translator, critic, and poet; he wrote upon such diverse subjects as Mary Queen of Scots and the customs of savage races, The Man in the Iron Mask and Theocritus, French romances and primitive magic, Burns and totems, Homer, dreams, ghosts, and fairy-tales. But as a matter of fact whatever he touched he illuminated, for his chief gifts were originality of attack, a penetrative critical power, a rapier-like style, a gift for unravelling difficult tangles, precision, and a capacity for details. Like Mr. Dobson, he estimated modestly the poetic product of his leisure moments. More serious in subject and manner than Mr. Dobson, less whimsical and graceful, his touch was always light and quick. A certain melancholy suffuses some of his poetry, but his verses in the Old French forms have the gayety of their kind. His first volume of poems,

Ballads and Lyrics of Old France (1872), contains charming experiments in metrical arrangement. In 1880 appeared *Ballades in Blue China*, quaint and humorous, and reminiscent, though in an entirely different spirit, of Mr. Dobson's *Proverbs in Porcelain*. Other volumes of verse are *Helen of Troy* (1882), *Rhymes à la Mode* (1884), *Grass of Parnassus* (1888), *New Collected Rhymes* (1905). From the 1884 volume is taken our first selection, the *Ballade of Middle Age*, a poem that well represents Lang's skill in the handling of French forms and the genial wisdom of his view of life. Maturity pokes sympathetic fun at the over-seriousness of a certain mood of youth wherein the heart pines for it knows not what. Well, now we know "Life's more amusing than we thought." In the eloquent and sententious sonnet on *Homer*, Lang varies the usual comparison of Homer's poetry with the multitudinous music of ocean by drawing a parallel between the Greek epic (its unknown authorship, its memories of a civilization long since passed away) and the river Nile (its source, in Lang's day still undiscovered, and its waters reflecting the ruins of another vanished age). The comparison is apt and complete. Of Lang's prose works the list is so very long and varied that we cannot reproduce it here. Of most interest to the ordinary reader are the series of fairy-tales (*Blue Fairy Tale Book*, 1889, and others of other 'colors'), the translation of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (both in collaboration), his *Letters to Dead Authors*, and the exciting prose romance, *The Land of Heart's Desire*, written with Rider Haggard.

Lang was born at Selkirk, Scotland, March 31, 1844. He was educated at Edinburgh Academy, St. Andrews University, and Balliol College, Oxford. In 1868 he was elected fellow of Merton College, Oxford; in 1888 he was appointed Lecturer on Natural Religion at his *Alma Mater*, St. Andrews. He died in 1912.

BALLADE OF MIDDLE AGE

Our youth began with tears and sighs,
With seeking what we could not find;
Our verses all were threnodies,
In elegiacs still we whined;
Our ears were deaf, our eyes were blind,
We sought and knew not what we sought.
We marvel, now we look behind:
Life's more amusing than we thought!

Oh, foolish youth, untimely wise!
Oh, phantoms of the sickly mind!
What? not content with seas and skies,
With rainy clouds and southern wind,
With common cares and faces kind,
With pains and joys each morning brought?
Ah, old, and worn, and tired we find
Life's more amusing than we thought!

Though youth "turns spectre-thin and dies,"
To mourn for youth we're not inclined;
We set our souls on salmon flies,
We whistle where we once repined.
Confound the woes of human-kind!
By Heaven we're "well deceived," I wot;
Who hum, contented or resigned,
"Life's more amusing than we thought!"

Envoy

O nate mecum, worn and lined
Our faces show, but *that* is naught;
Our hearts are young 'neath wrinkled rind:
Life's more amusing than we thought!

SONNET

HOMER

Homer, thy song men liken to the sea
With all the notes of music in its tone,
With tides that wash the dim dominion
Of Hades, and light waves that laugh in glee
Around the isles enchanted; nay, to me
Thy verse seems as the River of source unknown
That glasses Egypt's temples overthrown
In his sky-nurtured stream, eternally.

No wiser we than men of heretofore
To find thy sacred fountains guarded fast;

Enough, thy flood makes green our human shore,
As Nilus Egypt, rolling down his vast,
His fertile flood, that murmurs evermore
Of gods dethroned, and empires in the past.

ROBERT BRIDGES (1844–)

Robert Bridges, Poet Laureate since 1913, was born October 23, 1844. He gained distinction in the classics at Oxford, travelled on the Continent and in the East, practised medicine for some time, and retired to private life in 1882, devoting himself to music, metrics, and poetry. Classicist, traveller, physician, skilled musician, learned scholar, and delightful poet, he has for the last thirty-seven years pursued a deliberately chosen manner of life, 'far from the madding crowd.' He has not sacrificed his days and years in the monotonous mill of modern machinery and commerce; he has not been content with the *otium cum dignitate* of mere scholarship. Since the age of thirty-eight, like Wordsworth before him, he has lived a life wholly given over to the study, love, and making of "beauteous things." His mind has not been fevered by courting public applause; he has kept to his own quiet, strong way, undeterred by criticism, unspoiled by the laureateship. Standing apart from the throng he has had the satisfaction of seeing some small part of the throng daily turn aside to find strength and spiritual poise in the restraint and purity, the ease and precision, the reverence and quiet of his verse. "In him grace and gravity have been betrothed and are wedded and have not been divorced." Our specimens illustrate some of the qualities of his verse. If the reader will turn to other poems, *Invitation to the Country* and *Reply*, *There is a Hill beside the Silver Thames*, *Eros and Psyche*, *A Hymn of Nature*, and *On a Dead Child*, he will note still further a gentle sweetness conjoined with something both of shyness and austerity; novelty but subtlety of metrical effect, rather than the dithyrambic sensuousness of Swinburne or the *finesse* of Dobson and Lang; a delicacy that is strength, a perfect and unaffected sincerity; a love of nature and an unhurried, meditative regard of life; a note of self-dependence; and a certain compression of thought that challenges attention and effort. These qualities grow upon one as the poems are read again and again and repeated aloud. There is something about them — their unostentatious beauty and symmetry, and the inter-echoing of sound and sense — that reminds one of Milton's early poems minus the classical machinery but not minus the

classical equanimity. For Mr. Bridges has learned more than mythology from the Greeks.

In composing verse Mr. Bridges seems to pay less attention to the number and relative position of accented and unaccented syllables — *i.e.* to "feet" — than to the number of stresses to the line. He believes, moreover, as did Wordsworth, that poetry should follow the rules of natural speech. Hence his verse has a music of its own, — rich, various, and pure. The student will be interested in testing the truth of these observations in the lines printed below and in other poems by this author. His first volume appeared in 1873; his *Prometheus*, "a mask in the Greek manner," in 1883; *Eros and Psyche*, a version of the story by Apuleius, in 1885; various poetical dramas, 1885–1889, of which the most entertaining to the student will be *The Return of Ulysses; The Growth of Love*, a sonnet-sequence, in 1876 and 1889. His *Poetical Works* were published in six volumes, 1898–1905. The one volume Oxford edition of the *Poetical Works*, excluding the dramas, is the most convenient (1914).

I HAVE LOVED FLOWERS THAT FADE

I have loved flowers that fade,
Within whose magic tents
Rich hues have marriage made
With sweet unmemoried scents:
A honeymoon delight, —
A joy of love at sight,
That ages in an hour: —
My song be like a flower!

I have loved airs, that die
Before their charm is writ
Along a liquid sky
Trembling to welcome it.
Notes, that with pulse of fire
Proclaim the spirit's desire,
Then die, and are nowhere: —
My song be like an air!

Die, song, die like a breath,
And wither as a bloom:

Fear not a flowery death,
Dread not an airy tomb!
Fly with delight, fly hence!
'Twas thine love's tender sense
To feast; now on thy bier
Beauty shall shed a tear.

I LOVE ALL BEAUTEOUS THINGS

I love all beauteous things,
I seek and adore them;
God hath no better praise,
And man in his hasty days
Is honored for them.

I too will something make
And joy in the making;
Altho' to-morrow it seem
Like the empty words of a dream
Remembered on waking.

LAUS DEO

Let praise devote thy work, and skill employ
Thy whole mind, and thy heart be lost in joy.
Well-doing bringeth pride, this constant thought
Humility, that thy best done is nought.
Man doeth nothing well, be it great or small,
Save to praise God; but that hath savèd all:
For God requires no more than thou hast done,
And takes thy work to bless it for his own.

WEEP NOT TO-DAY

Weep not to-day: why should this sadness be?
Learn in present fears
To o'ermaster those tears
That unhindered conquer thee.

Think on thy past valor, thy future praise:
Up, sad heart, nor faint
In ungracious complaint,
Or a prayer for better days.

Daily thy life shortens, the grave's dark peace
Draweth surely nigh,
When good-night is good-by;
For the sleeping shall not cease.

Fight, to be found fighting: nor far away
Deem, nor strange thy doom.
Like this sorrow 'twill come,
And the day will be to-day.

EDMUND GOSSE (1849–)

Edmund Gosse was born in London, September 21, 1849, and was educated in Devonshire. From 1867 to 1875 he was assistant librarian at the British Museum; from 1875 to 1904, translator to the Board of Trade; also, from 1884 to 1890, Lecturer in English Literature at Trinity College, Cambridge. He has written many books in criticism and on the history of English literature; by his translations and articles he has introduced English readers to the Scandinavian literatures and in return has received honors from Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, as well as from France; he was chief literary adviser in the preparation of the tenth and eleventh editions of the Encyclopædia Britannica, and to the ninth and subsequent editions he himself contributed numerous articles. All this involves a story not only of persistent industry but also of wide and profound scholarship, ripe judgment, and impeccable taste. But like that other scholar of great industry and voluminous accomplishment, Andrew Lang, Mr. Gosse has also written exquisite poetry, and the sane, unpretentious beauty of his verse has added greatly to the admiration in which his name is held. His poetic style is simple and fluent, — generally of an ease almost colloquial; but its effect is deepened and mellowed by a calm and modest mysticism, which, as in our selection, displays his "heart in unison with all mankind," or, as in *The Farm*, teaches him the happy creed "that all fair things that bloom and die, Have conscious life as well as I," and that all beauty ripens "but to

fulfil its own delight." In other poems, to be sure, are notes less idyllic and pastoral, less of Devon and Devon lanes; for instance, the classical in *The Gifts of the Muses*, and the vigorous and heroic in the spirited ballad, *The Cruise of the Rover*. But whatever may be the variety of measure or mood, there is always present a spirit of strong restraint, an equilibrium of desire and deed. This spiritual serenity, this unadorned sincerity are Wordsworthian in their healing quality and, to some extent, in their derivation. Among his publications of verse are *On Viol and Flute* (1873), which contains our selection; *King Erik* (1876), a tragedy; *New Poems* (1879), among which are *The Farm*, *The Gifts of the Muses*, and the poignantly affectionate address *To my Daughter Teresa; Firdausi in Exile* (1885); *In Russet and Silver* (1894); *Collected Poems* (1896).

LYING IN THE GRASS

Between two golden tufts of summer grass,
I see the world through hot air as through glass,
And by my face sweet lights and colors pass.

Before me, dark against the fading sky,
I watch three mowers mowing, as I lie:
With brawny arms they sweep in harmony.

Brown English faces by the sun burnt red,
Rich glowing color on bare throat and head,
My heart would leap to watch them, were I dead!

And in my strong young living as I lie,
I seem to move with them in harmony —
A fourth is mowing, and that fourth am I.

The music of the scythes that glide and leap,
The young men whistling as their great arms sweep,
And all the perfume and sweet sense of sleep,

The weary butterflies that droop their wings,
The dreamy nightingale that hardly sings,
And all the lassitude of happy things,

Is mingling with the warm and pulsing blood,
That gushes through my veins a languid flood,
And feeds my spirit as the sap a bud.

Behind the mowers, on the amber air,
A dark-green beech-wood rises, still and fair,
A white path winding up it like a stair.

And see that girl, with pitcher on her head,
And clean white apron on her gown of red, —
Her even-song of love is but half-said:

She waits the youngest mower. Now he goes;
Her cheeks are redder than a wild blush-rose:
They climb up where the deepest shadows close.

But though they pass, and vanish, I am there.
I watch his rough hands meet beneath her hair,
Their broken speech sounds sweet to me like prayer.

Ah! now the rosy children come to play,
And romp and struggle with the new-mown hay;
Their clear high voices sound from far away.

They know so little why the world is sad,
They dig themselves warm graves and yet are glad;
Their muffled screams and laughter make me mad!

I long to go and play among them there;
Unseen, like wind, to take them by the hair,
And gently make their rosy cheeks more fair.

The happy children! full of frank surprise,
And sudden whims and innocent ecstasies;
What godhead sparkles from their liquid eyes!

No wonder round those urns of mingled clays
That Tuscan potters fashioned in old days,
And colored like the torrid earth ablaze,

We find the little gods and loves portrayed,
Through ancient forests wandering undismayed,
And fluting hymns of pleasure unafraid. 51

They knew, as I do now, what keen delight
A strong man feels to watch the tender flight
Of little children playing in his sight; 54

What pure sweet pleasure, and what sacred love,
Comes drifting down upon us from above,
In watching how their limbs and features move. 57

I do not hunger a well-stored mind.
I only wish to live my life, and find
My heart in unison with all mankind. 60

My life is like the single dewy star
That trembles on the horizon's primrose-bar, —
A microcosm where all things living are. 63

And if, among the noiseless grasses, Death
Should come behind and take away my breath,
I should not rise as one who sorroweth; 66

For I should pass; but all the world would be
Full of desire and young delight and glee,
And why should men be sad through loss of me? 69

The light is flying; in the silver-blue
The young moon shines from her bright window through:
The mowers are all gone, and I go too. 72

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY (1849–1903)

Mr. Gosse, Mr. Dobson, and Mr. Bridges have enjoyed the comparatively quiet ways of scholarship. William E. Henley lived a life of eruptions; his was the fervid career of the militant journalist,

he combative innovator, the daring radical. He was born August 23, 1849, at Gloucester. In his earlier years he suffered much from a physical affliction, for the treatment of which he entered the Old Edinburgh Infirmary in 1874. Here, during his sojourn of twenty months, he was visited by Robert Louis Stevenson, — the beginning of one of the most famous friendships in modern letters. Leaving the hospital, Henley turned to journalism, and became editor in turn of *London*, *The Magazine of Art*, and *The Scots Observer*. During his editorship Stevenson's *New Arabian Nights* appeared in the first of these journals, and Mr. Kipling's *Barrack-Room Ballads* in the last, which had become a mouthpiece of the new imperialism. To the first Henley contributed verses of his own, mostly in the Old French forms, and in these and other journals were printed his critical essays on art and literature, — always outspoken and frequently provocative of the literary skirmishes dear to his belligerent heart.

A vivid originality and a rousing energy in mood, subject, manner, and metrical form characterize Henley's work. In mood he is swift, passionate, rebellious, contentious, and always vital. He was the enemy of cant and futile conventions. Fear and the oppression of circumstances he scorned. His was the will to live the spacious life, to master one's fate, to be the captain of one's soul; and that will he asserted in season and out. This is the essential mood of his poetry and his prose, and it finds its finest utterance in his best known poem (1875), the first of those we have printed below. His subjects were novel, drawn from the commonplace, the prosaic, often the seemingly unpoetic; but into such subjects he entered imaginatively, making their human significance, their passion and pathos, so clear and telling that their poetry was acknowledged of all men. His first subjects were hospital scenes: patients and nurses, operations and clinics, casualty wards and broken limbs, hopeless cases and suicides, and the release from pain. His *In Hospital: Rhymes and Rhythms* was the harvest of his confinement to the Infirmary. No such unflinching realism had been known in English poetry, not even in George Crabbe's sketches of the life of the poor at the end of the eighteenth century. Later, for his *London Voluntaries*, he found congenial subjects in the crowded squares and thoroughfares of the great city, and interpreted their scenes with a pictorial veracity and an imaginative wizardry also unprecedented in English verse. In manner Henley is both realistic and impressionistic. He seizes deftly, unerringly upon two or three concrete details of character or scene, presents them swiftly with the minimum of epithet or qualifying phrase, and

gives you the impression not only of the whole scene, or personality, but of the essential spirit as well. Such verisimilitude of detail, such revelation or flash-light of spiritual significance were innovations in Henley's day. Since his time, developed as they have been by Mr. Kipling, by our own Frank Norris, and a host of short-story writers, they have become a literary fashion and are taught in our schools and colleges as the *ne plus ultra* of vivid composition. In metrical form Henley was also radical. The unrhymed, irregular rhythms in which he wrote much of his poetry are the natural vehicle for his impatient temperament, — a "free verse" which in its superb swiftness and vigor disproves all claim of kinship advanced by the shuffling or effeminate free verse of most of his imitators. Henley had new things to say and he said them in a new and characteristic way. His *Poems* (collected edition) are published by David Nutt and Charles Scribner's Sons (1 vol., 1897). For further reading the following are suggested: *In Hospital* (1873–1875); the Ballades and the rondel *What is to Come*, under *Bric à Brac* (1877–1888); "I *am the Reaper* and *Or ever the Knightly Years were Gone*, under *Echoes* (1888–1889); *London Voluntaries* (1890–1892); *We are the Choice of the Will* and *What have I Done for You* (a song of noble patriotism) under *Rhymes and Rhythms* (1889–1892), and *Epilogue* (1897).

I AM THE CAPTAIN OF MY SOUL

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

IN HOSPITAL

I. Enter Patient

The morning mists still haunt the stony street;
The northern summer air is shrill and cold;
And lo, the Hospital, grey, quiet, old,
Where Life and Death like friendly chafferers meet.
Thro' the loud spaciousness and draughty gloom
A small, strange child — so aged and yet so young! —
Her little arm besplinted and beslung,
Precedes me gravely to the waiting-room.
I limp behind, my confidence all gone.
The grey-haired soldier-porter waves me on,
And on I crawl, and still my spirits fail:
A tragic meanness seems so to environ
These corridors and stairs of stone and iron,
Cold, naked, clean — half-work house and half-jail.

II. Waiting

A square, squat room (a cellar on promotion),
Drab to the soul, drab to the very daylight;
Plasters astray in unnatural-looking tinware;
Scissors and lint and apothecary's jars.

Here, on a bench a skeleton would writhe from,
Angry and sore, I wait to be admitted:
Wait till my heart is lead upon my stomach,
While at their ease two dressers do their chores.

One has a probe — it feels to me a crowbar.
A small boy sniffs and shudders after bluestone.
A poor old tramp explains his poor old ulcers.
Life is (I think) a blunder and a shame.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850–1894)

Though the story of Stevenson's life and literary accomplishment belcngs rather to the history of fiction and essay than to that of poetry, yet his verses for children are so admirable that no apology is needed for including several of them in this book. Stevenson was born November 13, 1850. He was a delicate child and ill-health dogged him until his death. For three generations the Stevensons had built lighthouses, but after some attempts to interest himself in the family profession Robert Louis obtained permission to follow his own bent. At writing he toiled without stint. In a letter addressed in 1887 to an American friend he wrote: "I imagine nobody had ever such pains to learn a trade as I had; but I slogged at it day in and day out; and I frankly believe (thanks to my dire industry) I have done more with smaller gifts than almost any man of letters in the world." He had always had a marvellous desire to write, — a determination that was the best sort of gift. "All through my boyhood and youth I was known and pointed out for the pattern of an idler; and yet I was always busy on my own private end, which was to learn to write. I kept always two books in my pocket, one to read, one to write in . . . As I walked, my mind was busy fitting what I saw with appropriate words; when I sat by the roadside, I would either read, or a pencil and a penny version-book would be in my hand, to note down the features of the scene, or commemorate some halting stanzas. Thus I lived with words. And what I thus wrote was for no ulterior use; it was written consciously for practice. It was not so much that I wished to be an author (although I wished that too), as that I vowed I would learn to write. That was a proficiency that tempted me; and I practised to acquire it, as men learn to whittle, in a wager with myself." Even after he had attained mastery in his art the task of composition was frequently laborious; he usually rewrote his prose from two to four times, and he tells us how he would spend half an hour — or more — on a clause. The result is a style as limpid, various, and fluent as a mountain-stream.

His first books, *An Inland Voyage* (1878) and *Travels with a Donkey* (1879), are records of vacations in Europe. In 1879 he came to California, and his experiences in travelling steerage and second-class are told in *The Amateur Emigrant* and *Across the Plains*. He arrived in San Francisco sick and almost penniless, but the devoted nursing of Fanny Van de Grift Osbourne, whom he married in 1880, saved his life. *The Silverado Squatters*, a souvenir of his honeymoon in the

Californian mountains, was published in 1883, while he was trying to gain health in the south of France. *Treasure Island* (1883), *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), and *Kidnapped* (1886) — romances respectively of pirates, double-personality, and Scottish adventurers — brought him the full measure of fame. In 1888, still in the pursuit of health, he began a long voyage in the Pacific, finally settling at Samoa, where he built himself the famous home, Vailima. Here he lived the patriarchal life of an island chieftain, cultivated a plantation, enjoyed a greater vigor than he had ever known, wrote assiduously, and died, from a stroke of apoplexy, December 3, 1894. The following day six Samoan natives who acknowledged Stevenson as their chief carried his body to the top of a mountain above Vailima, overlooking the Pacific. There is the tomb of the "most beloved" and inscribed upon it are the lines of his *Requiem*, a memorial of his brave spirit and many wanderings.

Into all his works Stevenson has breathed the captivating charm of his personality. *A Child's Garden of Verses* (Longmans and Co., 1885; Scribner's Sons, 1905) is so faithful to the spirit of the most simple and winsome kind of poetry — the vivid imaginings of a child intent on its play — that all readers are ever anew and deeply indebted to the author. The pleasure which children take in this *Garden* is more than matched by the keen delight with which men and women, entering again, through its verse, into the child's most real unrealities, for a while escape from an adult world of unenlightened facts. But something more than an escape may be effected. The make-believes of the *Child's Garden* are naïve transformations of the commonplace, not mere retreats from it. And so it may happen that the grown-up who enjoys these make-believes may be led to see in the commonplace happenings of his own life meanings both rich and strange, until to him, too, as to the child in the Garden, there comes the *Happy Thought*,

> The world is so full of a number of things,
> I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.

From another volume of poems, *Underwoods* (Longmans and Co., 1887), are taken *The Sick Child* and the *Requiem*. Among other well known verses in the same collection are *A Song of the Road*, *It is the Season Now to Go*, and *A Mile an' a Bittock*. In 1890 appeared *Ballads*, written with more care than his other poems — most of which had been asides of the moment — and containing matter of spirited strength and gentle pathos, as in *Christmas at Sea*.

FROM A CHILD'S GARDEN OF VERSES

I. Travel

I should like to rise and go
Where the golden apples grow; —
Where below another sky
Parrot islands anchored lie,
And, watched by cockatoos and goats,
Lonely Crusoes building boats; —
Where in sunshine reaching out
Eastern cities, miles about,
Are with mosque and minaret
Among sandy gardens set,
And the rich goods from near and far
Hang for sale in the bazaar; —
Where the Great Wall round China goes,
And on one side the desert blows,
And with bell and voice and drum,
Cities on the other hum; —
Where are forests, hot as fire,
Wide as England, tall as a spire,
Full of apes and cocoa-nuts
And the negro hunters' huts; —
Where the knotty crocodile
Lies and blinks in the Nile,
And the red flamingo flies
Hunting fish before his eyes; —
Where in jungles, near and far,
Man-devouring tigers are,
Lying close and giving ear
Lest the hunt be drawing near,
Or a comer-by be seen
Swinging in a palanquin; —
Where among the desert sands
Some deserted city stands,
All its children, sweep and prince,
Grown to manhood ages since,
Not a foot in street or house,

Not a stir of child or mouse,
And when kindly falls the night,
In all the town no spark of light.
There I'll come when I'm a man
With a camel caravan;
Light a fire in the gloom
Of some dusty dining-room;
See the pictures on the walls,
Heroes, fights, and festivals;
And in a corner find the toys
Of the old Egyptian boys.

II. The Land of Counterpane

When I was sick and lay a-bed,
I had two pillows at my head,
And all my toys beside me lay
To keep me happy all the day.

And sometimes for an hour or so
I watched my leaden soldiers go,
With different uniforms and drills,
Among the bed-clothes, through the hills;

And sometimes sent my ships in fleets
All up and down among the sheets;
Or brought my trees and houses out,
And planted cities all about.

I was the giant great and still
That sits upon the pillow-hill,
And sees before him, dale and plain,
The pleasant land of counterpane.

III. The Wind

I saw you toss the kites on high
And blow the birds about the sky;
And all around I heard you pass,

Like ladies' skirts across the grass —
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

I saw the different things you did,
But always you yourself you hid.
I felt you push, I heard you call,
I could not see yourself at all —
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

O you that are so strong and cold,
O blower, are you young or old?
Are you a beast of field and tree,
Or just a stronger child than me?
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

IV. The Unseen Playmate

When children are playing alone on the green,
In comes the playmate that never was seen.
When children are happy and lonely and good,
The Friend of the Children comes out of the wood.

Nobody heard him and nobody saw,
His is a picture you never could draw,
But he's sure to be present, abroad or at home,
When children are happy and playing alone.

He lies in the laurels, he runs on the grass,
He sings when you tinkle the musical glass;
Whene'er you are happy and cannot tell why,
The Friend of the Children is sure to be by!

He loves to be little, he hates to be big,
'Tis he that inhabits the caves that you dig;
'Tis he when you play with your soldiers of tin
That sides with the Frenchmen and never can win.

'Tis he, when at night you go off to your bed,
Bids you go to your sleep and not trouble your head;
For wherever they're lying, in cupboard or shelf,
'Tis he will take care of your playthings himself!

V. Armies in the Fire

The lamps now glitter down the street:
Faintly sound the falling feet;
And the blue even slowly falls
About the garden trees and walls.

Now in the falling of the gloom
The red fire paints the empty room:
And warmly on the roof it looks,
And flickers on the backs of books.

Armies march by tower and spire
Of cities blazing, in the fire; —
Till as I gaze with staring eyes,
The armies fade, the lustre dies.

Then once again the glow returns;
Again the phantom city burns;
And down the red-hot valley, lo!
The phantom armies marching go!

Blinking embers, tell me true
Where are those armies marching to,
And what the burning city is
That crumbles in your furnaces!

VI. Historical Associations

Dear Uncle Jim, this garden ground
That now you smoke your pipe around,
Has seen immortal actions done
And valiant battles lost and won.

Here we had best on tip-toe tread,
While I for safety march ahead,
For this is that enchanted ground
Where all who loiter slumber sound.

Here is the sea, here is the sand,
Here is simple Shepherd's Land,
Here are the fairy hollyhocks,
And there are Ali Baba's rocks.

But yonder, see! apart and high,
Frozen Siberia lies; where I,
With Robert Bruce and William Tell,
Was bound by an enchanter's spell.

THE SICK CHILD

Child

O mother, lay your hand on my brow!
O mother, mother, where am I now?
Why is the room so gaunt and great?
Why am I lying awake so late?

Mother

Fear not at all: the night is still.
Nothing is here that means you ill.
Nothing but lamps the whole town through,
And never a child awake but you.

Child

Mother, mother, speak low in my ear,
Some of the things are so great and near,
Some are so small and far away,
I have a fear that I cannot say.
What have I done, and what do I fear,
And why are you crying, mother dear?

Mother

Out in the city, sounds begin,
Thank the kind God, the carts come in!

An hour or two more, and God is so kind,
The day shall be blue in the window-blind,
Then shall my child go sweetly asleep,
And dream of the birds and the hills of sleep.

REQUIEM

Under the wide and starry sky,
Dig the grave and let me lie.
Glad did I live and gladly die,
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

JOHN DAVIDSON (1857–1909)

John Davidson, poet, playwright, and novelist, was born in Renfrewshire, Scotland, April 11, 1857. His life was a struggle with poverty. At thirteen he was working in a sugar factory; at fifteen he was a pupil-teacher in his old school at Greenock; at nineteen he studied for one session at the University of Edinburgh. After that he taught in several Scottish schools until he was thirty-three, except for an interval when he was a clerk in a Glasgow thread firm. Each day of those years witnessed a dispiriting duel between the character of the man, imaginative and sensitive, and the dreary routine of his duties. Between 1886 and 1889 he published several poetical plays, of which *Bruce* is probably the most poetically conceived and vigorous. They all display inventive power, but they lack technique. Undaunted, he gave up school-teaching and resolved to devote all his effort to writing. "Instead of dying daily here," he said, "the worst is dying once of want." He went up to London, wrote, published, and starved. In 1890 appeared his prose romance, *Perfervid*, a work of genius, which was not appreciated then and has not yet come into its own. There followed in 1891 a volume of realistic poems, *In a Music Hall*, but the poet first achieved recognition in 1893 with a little book of verse, entitled *Fleet Street Eclogues*, in which debate — his real interest — is pursued without that necessity for plot which had irked him in his dramas. *Ballads and Songs* (1894), *Second*

Series of Fleet Street Eclogues (1895), *New Ballads* (1896) — called by one critic "parables in quatrains," and *The Last Ballad, etc.* (1898) brought him admiration and professional but not financial reward. Several poetic dramas followed, none successful; finally another volume of lyrical verse, *Holiday and Other Poems* (1903). In spite of a small pension from the crown his struggle for a livelihood was disheartening. He also feared a death from cancer. On March 23, 1909, he disappeared. Months later his body was found in the sea.

These facts, few as they are, throw light upon the character of Davidson's poetry. In the brave but hopeless conflict with grinding poverty lies the root of the question he puts to modern life: How to-day shall a man, dependent upon his unaided effort for meat and drink, know beauty and enjoy it and be free? How may he call his soul his own in this age of omnipresent machinery for the making of things, and omnipotent desire — and unceasing scramble — to possess things? The sacrifice of the workman's soul in the struggle to exist is Davidson's recurring theme. At times the problem wraps the poet in black despair. But again and again, out of the discordant and confusing tumult of experience there rises clear an old and imperishable note: he hears and, like Henley, sings of courage and adventure, — "to brave and to know the unknown." Such is the burden of our second selection.

Davidson annexed new territory to the realm of poetry. Glasgow and London workmen, rivets and steam-whistles, furnaces and anvils, looms and power-wheels, trains and suburbs, the commercial and mechanical Juggernaut, the lives crushed out: these are the material of his problem. Fired by a sense of injustice he seeks to solve the problem by processes of reason. But it is his imagination that is fired. Impatient and masterful, he is not systematic, not profoundly analytic. He trusts his poetic intuition of the deeper values and verities, and his utterance of them is volcanic. Much good poetry on these subjects is to be found in his eclogues; but better in occasional lyrics such as *The Price*, *Waiting*, *The Aristocrat*, *A Song of the Road;* the best of all in the ballads, *A Workman*, *A Poet Born*, *An Artist's Wife*, *A Woman and her Sons*, — each too long to be included among our selections.

Rebellious and at times despondent, Davidson is by no means without a reasoned philosophy of God and his creation. That philosophy finds its noblest expression in the selection which we have entitled "God is an Artist, not an Artisan." He tells us that God works not like a mechanic, pulling a lever and turning out a product finished be-

yond improvement from the first. God works like an architect or a sculptor: He made the world gradually, wondrously, lovingly, till, alas, life began to feed on life! Then He made man with a mind to comprehend the wondrous scheme, to control the violence of unthinking creatures, to mould God's work with reason and with love "to some accomplished end": to be the prince of all and artist of man's own godlike destiny. Of man so toiling, of the many contradictions between his strength and his weakness, but the nobility of his mission, we find other expressions in the poems *Earth to Earth*, *Artist and Votary*, and *A Ballad of Heaven*. Through all Davidson's work run Shakespearian strains of fancy wild, and love of the evanescent aspects of meadow and cloud and spring breezes, for which the soul bound in the city longs. Drollery he has, too, and pregnant humor. But for him these dearer delights and lighter graces are not a refuge from a life outworn: man's love of them is the citadel of his revolt against a world that would crush them.

Davidson's American publishers are the John Lane Company, New York.

GOD IS AN ARTIST, NOT AN ARTISAN

Basil: . . . God has no machine
For punching perfect worlds from cakes of chaos. . .
He works but as He can;
God is an artist, not an artisan.
Darkly imagining,
With ice and fire and storm,
With floods and earthquake-shocks
He gave our sphere its form.
The meaning of His work
Grew as He wrought.
In creases of the mud, in cooling rocks
He saw ideas lurk —
Mountains and streams.
Of life the passionate thought
Haunted His dreams.
At last He tried to do
The thing He dreamt.
With plasm in throbbing motes,
With moss and ferns and giant beasts unkempt

He labored long, until at length He seemed
To breathe out being. Flowers and forests grew
Like magic at His word: mountain and plain,
Jungle and sea and waste,
With miracles of strength and beauty teemed:
In every drop and every grain,
Each speck and stain,
Was some new being placed,
Minute or viewless. Then was He aghast,
And all His passion to create grew tame;
For life battened on life. He thought
To shatter all; but in a space
He loved His work again and sought
To crown it with a sovereign grace;
And soon the great idea came.
"If I could give my work a mind;
If I could make it comprehend
How wondrously it is designed;
Enable it with head and heart
To mould itself to some accomplished end —
That were indeed transcendent art."
Trembling with ecstasy He then made man,
To be the world's atonement and its prince.
And in the world God has done nothing since;
He keeps not tinkering at a finished plan;
He is an artist, not an artisan. . .

Sandy: If God is art and art is God,
I fear I don't believe in God.

Basil: That matters not since this is true —
Hear me before you go away,
And turn this over in your heart —
That God Himself believes in you.

THE UNKNOWN

To brave and to know the unknown
Is the high world's motive and mark,
Though the way with snares be strewn.

The Earth itself alone
    Wheels through the light and the dark
Onward to meet the unknown.

Each soul, upright or prone,
    While the owl sings or the lark,
Must pass where the bones are strewn.

Power on the loftiest throne
    Can fashion no certain ark
That shall stem and outride the unknown.

Beauty must doff her zone,
    Strength trudge unarmed and stark,
Though the way with eyes be strewn.

This only can atone,
    The high world's motive and mark,
To brave and to know the unknown
Though the way with fire be strewn.

SIR WILLIAM WATSON (1858–)

Sir William Watson's life has been one of comparative ease and quiet, save for occasional fiery utterances on political questions and a temporary estrangement from the public because of his opposition to the Boer War (see his *For England: Poems Written during Estrangement*). He was born in Yorkshire, August 2, 1858, and educated at Liverpool. He published his first volume of verse in 1880. In 1884 appeared *Epigrams of Art, Life, and Nature;* in 1885 his remarkable sonnet-sequence, *Ver Tenebrosum;* in 1890 the elegy, *Wordsworth's Grave*, with the second edition of which in 1891 and an article on it by Grant Allen in the August number of *The Fortnightly Review* of the same year, Sir William (at the time Mr.) Watson began to be known as a poet of great gift and promise. In 1893 was published another elegy, *Lacrymæ Musarum*, the finest of the poetic tributes composed upon the death of Tennyson. A little later Gladstone awarded the distinguished elegist the Civil List pension of £200 vacated by the death of Tennyson. Other poems of a political and

philosophical nature have appeared from time to time. In 1917 his poems of the Great War were collected in *The Man Who Saw*. He was knighted in 1917.

On more than one occasion Sir William Watson has scored political measures and their proponents in verse of impassioned indignation. He is a man of intense conviction. Even his literary prejudices he seems to take to heart. But his distinguishing trait is a poetical conservatism, a desire to return to the earlier and, in his view, nobler traditions of Wordsworth and Arnold. His reflective poems are characterized by a deliberate restraint, a deep and steady but not coruscating ardor of the imagination, an epigrammatic conciseness of statement, a philosophical breadth, and a spiritual peace not shaken by the clash and clangor of modern industrialism. Above contemporary confusions he lifts us to the dispassionate view of the glory and splendor of life, — the universal view and the profound comfort. "By the distinction and clarity of his style and the dignity of his movement he stands in the true classical tradition of great English verse, in a generation rather given over to lawlessness and experiment." These traits are seen at their best in his most famous poem, *Wordsworth's Grave*. Different as this elegy is in conception, mood, and manner from the other elegies produced in full or represented in this book, it may yet be counted as of their company. It has not the tone of sublime passion and imaginative grandeur of the *Adonais;* it has not the grace and silvery music of *Lycidas;* it has not the intimate, popular quality of *The Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, or the philosophical scope and lyric variety of *In Memoriam*. But it has a grave tranquillity — interrupted but for a moment (ll. 121–140) by a noble if not Miltonic indignation (compare *Lycidas*, ll. 108–131). Its elevated tone and contemplative sweetness, its sincerity and restraint of passion, its fit and large simplicity of diction, and its extraordinary directness of statement entitle it to high place. The tribute to Wordsworth is offered with unsurpassed sympathy and a profound understanding of the master's teaching; the protest against insincerity, voluptuousness, and trifling in art, is trenchant, scornful, but dignified. The elegy has something of its own to say to minds distraught by the fevered century and it says it clearly, unmistakably. One of the most interesting features of the poem is its penetrative literary criticism. An epigrammatic compression of statement, which Sir William had practised in his Epigrams of 1884, is most happily evident in his criticisms of upwards of a dozen poets and in his apt arraignment of certain previous and

contemporary movements in poetry. These very appropriately serve as foil to, and setting for, his praise of Wordsworth. The student may find delight and profit in comparing these estimates with his own impressions as gathered from his study of some of the poets in this volume. If he can understand and enjoy the masterly criticism, he will have satisfied one of the best possible tests that could be set upon his reading. Watson's *Selected Poems* are published by John Lane Company, 1903.

WORDSWORTH'S GRAVE

I

The old rude church, with bare, bald tower, is here;
Beneath its shadow high-born Rotha flows;
Rotha, remembering well who slumbers near,
And with cool murmur lulling his repose.

Rotha, remembering well who slumbers near,
His hills, his lakes, his streams are with him yet.
Surely the heart that read her own heart clear
Nature forgets not soon: 'tis we forget.

We that with vagrant soul his fixity
Have slighted; faithless, done his deep faith wrong,
Left him for poorer loves, and bowed the knee
To misbegotten strange new gods of song.

Yet, led by hollow ghost or beckoning elf
Far from her homestead to the desert bourn,
The vagrant soul returning to herself
Wearily wise, must needs to him return.

To him and to the powers that with him dwell: —
Inflowings that divulged not whence they came;
And that secluded spirit unknowable,
The mystery we make darker with a name;

The Somewhat which we name but cannot know,
Ev'n as we name a star and only see
His quenchless flashings forth, which ever show
And ever hide him, and which are not he.

II

Poet who sleepest by this wandering wave!
When thou wast born, what birth-gift hadst thou then?
To thee what wealth was that the Immortals gave,
The wealth thou gavest in thy turn to men?

Not Milton's keen, translunar music thine;
Not Shakespeare's cloudless, boundless human view;
Not Shelley's flush of rose on peaks divine;
Nor yet the wizard twilight Coleridge knew.

What hadst thou that could make so large amends
For all thou hadst not and thy peers possessed,
Motion and fire, swift means to radiant ends? —
Thou hadst, for weary feet, the gift of rest.

From Shelley's dazzling glow or thundrous haze,
From Byron's tempest-anger, tempest-mirth,
Men turned to thee and found — not blast and blaze,
Tumult of tottering heavens, but peace on earth.

Nor peace that grows by Lethe, scentless flower,
There in white languors to decline and cease;
But peace whose names are also rapture, power,
Clear sight, and love: for these are parts of peace.

III

I hear it vouched the Muse is with us still; —
If less divinely frenzied than of yore,
In lieu of feelings she has wondrous skill
To simulate emotion felt no more.

Not such the authentic Presence pure, that made
This valley vocal in the great days gone! —
In *his* great days, while yet the spring-time played
About him, and the mighty morning shone.

No word-mosaic artificer, he sang
A lofty song of lowly weal and dole.
Right from the heart, right to the heart it sprang,
Or from the soul leapt instant to the soul.

He felt the charm of childhood, grace of youth,
Grandeur of age, insisting to be sung.
The impassioned argument was simple truth
Half-wondering at its own melodious tongue.

Impassioned? ay, to the song's ecstatic core!
But far removed were clangor, storm and feud;
For plenteous health was his, exceeding store
Of joy, and an impassioned quietude.

IV

A hundred years ere he to manhood came,
Song from celestial heights had wandered down,
Put off her robe of sunlight, dew, and flame,
And donned a modish dress to charm the Town.

Thenceforth she but festooned the porch of things;
Apt at life's lore, incurious what life meant.
Dextrous of hand, she struck her lute's few strings;
Ignobly perfect, barrenly content.

Unflushed with ardor and unblanched with awe,
Her lips in profitless derision curled,
She saw with dull emotion — if she saw —
The vision of the glory of the world.

The human masque she watched, with dreamless eyes
In whose clear shallows lurked no trembling shade:
The stars, unkenned by her, might set and rise,
Unmarked by her, the daisies bloom and fade.

The age grew sated with her sterile wit.
Herself waxed weary on her loveless throne.

Men felt life's tide, the sweep and surge of it,
And craved a living voice, a natural tone.

For none the less, though song was but half true,
The world lay common, one abounding theme.
Man joyed and wept, and fate was ever new,
And love was sweet, life real, death no dream.

In sad stern verse the rugged scholar-sage
Bemoaned his toil unvalued, youth uncheered.
His numbers wore the vesture of the age,
But, 'neath it beating, the great heart was heard.

From dewy pastures, uplands sweet with thyme,
A virgin breeze freshened the jaded day.
It wafted Collins' lonely vesper-chime,
It breathed abroad the frugal note of Gray.

It fluttered here and there, nor swept in vain
The dusty haunts where futile echoes dwell, —
Then, in a cadence soft as summer rain,
And sad from Auburn voiceless, drooped and fell.

It drooped and fell, and one 'neath northern skies,
With southern heart, who tilled his father's field,
Found Poesy a-dying, bade her rise
And touch quick Nature's hem and go forth healed.

On life's broad plain the ploughman's conquering share
Upturned the fallow lands of truth anew,
And o'er the formal garden's trim parterre
The peasant's team a ruthless furrow drew.

Bright was his going forth, but clouds ere long
Whelmed him; in gloom his radiance set, and those
Twin morning stars of the new century's song,
Those morning stars that sang together, rose.

In elvish speech the *Dreamer* told his tale
Of marvellous oceans swept by fateful wings. —

The *Seër* strayed not from earth's human pale,
But the mysterious face of common things

He mirrored as the moon in Rydal Mere
Is mirrored, when the breathless night hangs blue:
Strangely remote she seems and wondrous near,
And by some nameless difference born anew.

V

Peace — peace — and rest! Ah, how the lyre is loth,
Or powerless now, to give what all men seek!
Either it deadens with ignoble sloth
Or deafens with shrill tumult, loudly weak.

Where is the singer whose large notes and clear
Can heal and arm and plenish and sustain?
Lo, one with empty music floods the ear,
And one, the heart refreshing, tires the brain.

And idly tuneful, the loquacious throng
Flutter and twitter, prodigal of time,
And little masters make a toy of song
Till grave men weary of the sound of rhyme.

And some go prankt in faded antique dress,
Abhorring to be hale and glad and free;
And some parade a conscious naturalness,
The scholar's not the child's simplicity.

Enough; — and wisest who from words forbear.
The kindly river rails not as it glides;
And suave and charitable, the winning air
Chides not at all, or only him who chides.

VI

Nature! we storm thine ear with choric notes.
Thou answerest through the calm great nights and days,

"Laud me who will: not tuneless are your throats;
Yet if ye paused I should not miss the praise."

We falter, half-rebuked, and sing again.
We chant thy desertness and haggard gloom,
Or with thy splendid wrath inflate the strain,
Or touch it with thy color and perfume.

One, his melodious blood aflame for thee,
Wooed with fierce lust, his hot heart world-defiled.
One, with the upward eye of infancy,
Looked in thy face, and felt himself thy child.

Thee he approached without distrust or dread —
Beheld thee throned, an awful queen, above —
Climbed to thy lap and merely laid his head
Against thy warm wild heart of mother-love.

He heard that vast heart beating — thou didst press
Thy child so close, and lov'dst him unaware.
Thy beauty gladdened him; yet he scarce less
Had loved thee, had he never found thee fair!

For thou wast not as legendary lands
To which with curious eyes and ears we roam.
Nor wast thou as a fane 'mid solemn sands,
Where palmers halt at evening. Thou wast home.

And here, at home, still bides he; but he sleeps;
Not to be wakened even at thy word;
Though we, vague dreamers, dream he somewhere keeps
An ear still open to thy voice still heard, —

Thy voice, as heretofore, about him blown,
For ever blown about his silence now;
Thy voice, though deeper, yet so like his own
That almost, when he sang, we deemed 'twas thou!

VII

Behind Helm Crag and Silver Howe the sheen
Of the retreating day is less and less.
Soon will the lordlier summits, here unseen,
Gather the night about their nakedness.

The half-heard bleat of sheep comes from the hill.
Faint sounds of childish play are in the air.
The river murmurs past. All else is still.
The very graves seem stiller than they were.

Afar though nation be on nation hurled,
And life with toil and ancient pain depressed,
Here one may scarce believe the whole wide world
Is not at peace, and all man's heart at rest.

Rest! 'twas the gift *he* gave; and peace! the shade
He spread, for spirits fevered with the sun.
To him his bounties are come back — here laid
In rest, in peace, his labor nobly done.

RUDYARD KIPLING (1865–)

Rudyard Kipling was born December 30, 1865, at Bombay, where his father, recently arrived from England, was Professor of Architectural Sculpture. Like the children of most parents in the Anglo-Indian services, the boy and his little sister spent their youth in England. There they lived from 1871 on; part of the time with Mrs. Kipling's sister, the wife of Edward (later Sir Edward) Burne-Jones, the famous painter, a friend of Rossetti and Morris. In 1878 Rudyard was sent to school at Westward Ho, Bideford, Devon. Here, instead of aiming at school honors, he read with avidity and devoted himself to original composition. See his story, *Stalky and Co.* He published verses in more than one journal before he was seventeen. In his poetic ambitions he was encouraged by his parents, his uncle's family and their literary friends, and some of his teachers. Mr. Kipling returned to India in 1882 and for the next seven years was assistant-editor, successively, of the Lahore *Civil and Military Gazette* and the

Allahabad *Pioneer*. In the former journal appeared his *Departmental Ditties* and more than half of the stories first published in 1887 as *Plain Tales from the Hills*. During the next two years he wrote similar stories for *The Pioneer*, and published in book form six collections of them. Both poems and stories won instant recognition. In 1889 Mr. Kipling started on a tour round the world by way of Hongkong, Nagasaki, and San Francisco, writing letters *en route* for the *Pioneer* which were printed under the title, *From Sea to Sea*. He arrived in London the same year, and republished in 1890 the *Plain Tales from the Hills*. The book was received with enthusiasm both in England and America. The *Barrack-Room Ballads* issued the next year established Mr. Kipling's reputation as a poet of magic newness, humor, pathos, and bewitching melody. From that time his numerous poems and tales have achieved ever increasing success. In 1891 he resumed his journey round the world. On his return to London he married Caroline Starr Balestier, daughter of Mr. Wolcott Balestier of New York. Until 1896 the Kiplings lived at Brattleboro, Vermont. In 1897–1898 they were in South Africa. Since 1898 Mr. Kipling has travelled extensively but his home has been in Sussex, at first near Rottingdean. He lives now at Batemans, near Burwash. In 1907 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. In 1915 he lost his only son in the war.

Of Mr. Kipling's prose works we cannot speak here. The student has known *The Jungle Books* and the *Just So* Stories from childhood; he should read *Soldiers Three*, *Captains Courageous*, *Wee Willie Winkie*, *The Light that Failed*, *Kim*, and *The Day's Work*. The remaining volumes of poems are *The Seven Seas* (1896), *The Five Nations* (1903), *The Years Between* (1919). Practically all of his poems are to be found in *Rudyard Kipling's Verse: Inclusive Edition* (Doubleday, Page and Co., New York, 1919).

During the last thirty years England has had no poet more virile, consistent, and sincere in the interpretation of national and social, practical and spiritual movements than Rudyard Kipling; no poet so fearless and accurate in the prophecy of events. Nor has his teaching been salutary to the British Commonwealth alone; it has beneficially influenced the entire English-speaking world. He finds the theme for his noblest verse in national honor and responsibility and the clean and vigorous manhood upon which they must be based. His gospel is the gospel of work, discipline, willing sacrifice. Man is made to serve. He best serves the world who best conserves the national inheritance of righteousness.

Fair is our lot — O goodly is our heritage!
(Humble ye, my people, and be fearful in your mirth!)

So opens the *Song of the English*, and it is a song for young Americans to-day. Depart not from righteousness, says the poet; lend not the ear to evil counsellors. "Hold ye the Faith — the Faith our Fathers sealèd us." To God alone "pay single heart and single sword . . . Keep ye the Law — be swift in all obedience . . . Clear the land of evil . . . Make ye sure to each his own . . . By the peace among Our peoples, let men know we serve the Lord." This is the lesson of the *Recessional* and the *Hymn before Action*, too. — No little Englander is Mr. Kipling: "What should they know of England who only England know?" He is the conscience of all the nations that constitute the British Commonwealth; the spokesman of their essential unity: in freedom and sovereignty, individual, but knit by "love without promise or fee" with the "Mother that bore them." He is not an imperialist autocratic and covetous of dominion; his "imperialism" is the mission of rulers — to "serve and love the lands they rule"; to keep faith with the Mother and the world. He is no militarist: he believes in being "sure-guarded, — forthright, accoutred, accepting when the hour of trouble comes"; for we "are neither children nor Gods, but men in a world of men" (*The English Flag*, *The Song of the Sons*, *England's Answer*, *A School Song*, *The Islanders*, *The Lesson*, *Before a Midnight Breaks in Storm*, *The Dykes*, *The Rowers*). His gospel is for Americans as well as for his own people (*An American*, *The White Man's Burden*, *The Question*, *The Choice*). Rudyard Kipling is the representative poet of the Anglo-Saxon race to-day, the uncrowned laureate.

National duty and destiny are not Mr. Kipling's only theme. He sings of life in its fullness: its spirit of adventure, its heroism, its ecstasy, its humor, its pathos, its poetic and religious aspiration. "The gift of imagination, with which he is endowed as few men have ever been, has quickened and deepened his sympathies with men of every class and race." And as time has passed his vision has broadened and his insight has deepened. He is the poet of the sea, of *The Last Chantey* and *The Coastwise Lights*, and of the land, *The Native Born;* of Tommy Atkins, and of the Civil Service official; of *Fuzzy-Wuzzy* and *Gunga Din;* of Kitchener and Roberts; of the *Broken Men* and the tramp; of *For to Admire* and the *Chant-Pagan* and *Tramp-Royal;* of Greece, and South Africa, and *Christmas in India;* of *The Colonel's Lady an' Judy O'Grady;* of princes

and peasants and popes; of the passion for the countryside, of *Sussex*, and of *The Flowers*. He is the poet of the temper of the day, scientific, democratic, industrial, commercial; of man's world — forceful, cruel, vulgar, tender, and pathetic, serious or ludicrous; of the commonplace made significant; of the dignity of the man in the crowd and of the worth of things — especially of the thing *done;* of the romance of real life; of the romance of the ideal.

In one of the noblest of his poems, *To the True Romance*, Mr. Kipling sings of the ideal that makes life worth living. This ideal he calls *true* romance. It is the poetry of life, and that is no make-believe; it is the spirit divine, throbbing in the breast and glowing in the imagination, that cheers us in adversity and fires us to lofty desire and deed. The "True Romance" is the mother of wisdom and justice and worth and hope and beauty and love. Her face is "far from this our war." Her "feet have trod so near to God I may not follow them"; I may see her and touch her garment's hem only in dreams. I shall not find her, nor know her till I die. The "True Romance" inspires invention and heroic conduct. She is the "comfortress of unsuccess." She makes man strong to stand before fate; she atones for the uncertainties of chance. She is charity and faith and heavenly truth; the angel of the glory of what is now incomplete. She is the mother of religion, eternal in man's soul. From *The Palace* we learn further that to realize this poetry of life one must labor, one must build. But not with selfish end, nor with expectation of completing the palace of one's dream. We build for the generations that follow. They reconstruct, approaching a little nearer to perfection. In his verses dedicated to Wolcott Balestier, and opening "Beyond the path of the outmost sun," Mr. Kipling makes plain that such service to our fellow men, "in simpleness and gentleness and honor and clean mirth," is the test of religion. In whatever heaven there is — "Sit such as fought and sailed and ruled and loved and made our world . . . . It is their will to serve or be still as fitteth our Father's praise." To them the wise Lord God tells tales of his labors, "And they rise to their feet as He passes by — gentlemen unafraid." That He sets them to work anew "for the joy of the working," we discover not only from this poem but from the matchless stanzas of *When Earth's Last Picture is Painted*. The man of footless existence and borrowed opinions Mr. Kipling despises, also the trickster, the traducer, the traitor (*Tomlinson*, *The Hyænas*, *Gehazi*). For the undeservedly unfortunate and the truly penitent he has nothing but pity and encouragement.

As a balladist, as a writer of swinging and manly lyrics, dramatic monologues, and narrative sketches, Mr. Kipling is supreme among the moderns. Read *The Ballad of East and West*, *Bolivar*, *Danny Deever*, *The Long Trail*, *The Song of the Banjo*, *Mandalay*, *Boots*, *The Truce of the Bear*, *M'Andrew's Hymn*, *The Mary Gloster*, *The 'Eathen*. He has written in a multiplicity of metres and with a marvellous mastery of rhythms. The drum and fife of his earlier songs and ballads must not deafen the ear to the richer and loftier strains of his poems of nature, his elegies, his prayers, and his hymns. In *My New-Cut Ashlar*, *The Children's Song*, the *Hymn before Action*, and *For All we Have and Are*, as in the *Recessional*, he attains the majestic movement and the awe of the Hebrew prophet. Mr. Kipling has studied many masters, Poe, Bret Harte, Emerson, Shelley, Browning, Macaulay, Tennyson, Swinburne; but his music, his forthright diction, and his message are his own.

MANDALAY [1]

By the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin' eastward to the sea,
There's a Burma girl a-settin', an' I know she thinks o' me;
For the wind is in the palm-trees, an' the temple-bells they say:
"Come you back, you British soldier; come you back to Mandalay!"
Come you back to Mandalay,
Where the old Flotilla lay:
Can't you 'ear their paddles chunkin' from Rangoon to Mandalay?
On the road to Mandalay,
Where the flyin'-fishes play,
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China 'crost the Bay!

'Er petticoat was yaller an' 'er little cap was green,
An' 'er name was Supi-yaw-lat — jes' the same as Theebaw's Queen,
An' I seed her first a-smokin' of a whackin' white cheroot,
An' a-wastin' Christian kisses on an 'eathen idol's foot:

[1] The following poems by Rudyard Kipling are used by permission of and special arrangement with Doubleday, Page and Co.

Bloomin' idol made o' mud —
Wot they called the Great Gawd Budd —
Plucky lot she cared for idols when I kissed 'er where she stud!
On the road to Mandalay —

When the mist was on the rice-fields an' the sun was droppin' slow,
She'd git 'er little banjo an' she'd sing "*Kulla-lo-lo!*"
With 'er arm upon my shoulder an' her cheek agin my cheek
We useter watch the steamers an' the *hathis* pilin' teak.
Elephints a-pilin' teak
In the sludgy, squdgy creek,
Where the silence 'ung that 'eavy you was 'arf afraid to speak!
On the road to Mandalay —

But that's all shove be'ind me — long ago an' fur away,
An' there ain't no 'buses runnin' from the Bank to Mandalay;
An' I'm learnin' 'ere in London what the ten-year soldier tells:
"If you've 'eard the East a-callin', you won't never 'eed naught else."
No! you won't 'eed nothin' else
But them spicy garlic smells,
An' the sunshine an' the palm-trees an' the tinkly temple-bells!
On the road to Mandalay —

I am sick o' wastin' leather on these gritty pavin'-stones,
An' the blasted Henglish drizzle wakes the fever in my bones;
Tho' I walks with fifty 'ousemaids outer Chelsea to the Strand,
An' they talks a lot o' lovin', but wot do they understand?
Beefy face an' grubby 'and —
Law! wot *do* they understand?
I've a neater, sweeter maiden in a cleaner, greener land!
On the road to Mandalay —

Ship me somewheres east of Suez, where the best is like the worst,
Where there aren't no Ten Commandments an' a man can raise a thirst;

For the temple-bells are callin', an' it's there that I would be —
By the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin' lazy at the sea;
On the road to Mandalay,
Where the old Flotilla lay,
With our sick beneath the awnings when we went to Mandalay!
On the road to Mandalay,
Where the flyin'-fishes play,
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China 'crost the Bay!

GUNGA DIN

You may talk o' gin and beer
When you're quartered safe out 'ere,
An' you're sent to penny-fights an' Aldershot it;
But when it comes to slaughter
You will do your work on water,
An' you'll lick the bloomin' boots of 'im that's got it.
Now in Injia's sunny clime,
Where I used to spend my time
A-servin' of 'Er Majesty the Queen,
Of all them black-faced crew
The finest man I knew
Was our regimental *bhisti*, Gunga Din.
He was "Din! Din! Din!
You limpin' lump o' brick-dust, Gunga Din!
Hi! *slippy hitherao!*
Water, get it! *Panee lao!*
You squidgy-nosed old idol, Gunga Din!"

The uniform 'e wore
Was nothin' much before,
An' rather less than 'arf o' that be'ind,
For a piece o' twisty rag
An' a goatskin water-bag
Was all the field equipment 'e could find.
When the sweatin' troop-train lay

In a sidin' through the day,
Where the 'eat would make your bloomin' eyebrows crawl,
We shouted " Harry By ! "
Till our throats were bricky-dry,
Then we wopped 'im 'cause 'e couldn't serve us all.
It was " Din ! Din ! Din !
You 'eathen, where the mischief 'ave you been ?
You put some *juldee* in it,
Or I'll *marrow* you this minute
If you don't fill up my helmet, Gunga Din ! "

'E would dot an' carry one
Till the longest day was done,
An' 'e didn't seem to know the use o' fear.
If we charged or broke or cut,
You could bet your bloomin' nut,
'E'd be waitin' fifty paces right flank rear.
With 'is *mussick* on 'is back,
'E would skip with our attack,
An' watch us till the bugles made " Retire."
An' for all 'is dirty 'ide
'E was white, clear white, inside
When 'e went to tend the wounded under fire !
It was " Din ! Din ! Din ! "
With the bullets kickin' dust-spots on the green.
When the cartridges ran out,
You could 'ear the front-files shout :
" Hi ! ammunition-mules an' Gunga Din ! "

I shan't forgit the night
When I dropped be'ind the fight
With a bullet where my belt-plate should 'a' been.
I was chokin' mad with thirst,
An' the man that spied me first
Was our good old grinnin', gruntin' Gunga Din.
'E lifted up my 'ead,
An' 'e plugged me where I bled,
An' 'e guv me 'arf-a-pint o' water — green :

It was crawlin' and it stunk,
But of all the drinks I've drunk,
I'm gratefullest to one from Gunga Din.
It was " Din! Din! Din!
'Ere's a beggar with a bullet through 'is spleen;
'E's chawin' up the ground,
An' 'e's kickin' all around:
For Gawd's sake git the water, Gunga Din! "

'E carried me away
To where a *dooli* lay,
An' a bullet come an' drilled the beggar clean.
'E put me safe inside,
An' just before 'e died:
" I 'ope you like your drink," sez Gunga Din.
So I'll meet 'im later on
In the place where 'e is gone —
Where it's always double drill and no canteen;
'E'll be squattin' on the coals
Givin' drink to pore damned souls,
An' I'll get a swig in Hell from Gunga Din!
Yes, — Din! Din! Din!
You Lazarushian-leather Gunga Din!
Tho' I've belted you an' flayed you,
By the livin' Gawd that made you,
You're a better man than I am, Gunga Din!

IF

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream — and not make dreams your master;
  If you can think — and not make thoughts your aim,
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
  And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
  Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
  And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
  And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
  And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
  To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
  Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on!"

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
  Or walk with Kings — nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
  If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
  With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
  And — which is more — you'll be a Man, my son!

WHEN EARTH'S LAST PICTURE IS PAINTED

When Earth's last picture is painted and the tubes are twisted and dried,
When the oldest colors have faded, and the youngest critic has died,
We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it — lie down for an æon or two,
Till the Master of All Good Workmen shall put us to work anew.

And those that were good shall be happy: they shall sit in a golden chair;
They shall splash at a ten-league canvas with brushes of comet's hair.
They shall find real saints to draw from — Magdalene, Peter, and Paul;
They shall work for an age at a sitting and never be tired at all!

And only the Master shall praise us, and only the Master shall blame;
And no one shall work for money, and no one shall work for fame,
But each for the joy of the working, and each, in his separate star,
Shall draw the Thing as he sees It for the God of Things as They are!

RECESSIONAL

God of our fathers, known of old,
Lord of our far-flung battle-line,
Beneath whose awful Hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine —
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies;
The Captains and the Kings depart:
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

Far-called, our navies melt away;
On dune and headland sinks the fire:
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!

Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe,
Such boastings as the Gentiles use,
Or lesser breeds without the Law —
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard,
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And guarding, calls not Thee to guard,
For frantic boast and foolish word —
Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord!

FOR ALL WE HAVE AND ARE

For all we have and are,
For all our children's fate,
Stand up and take the war.
The Hun is at the gate!
Our world has passed away
In wantonness o'erthrown.
There is nothing left to-day
But steel and fire and stone!
Though all we knew depart,
The old Commandments stand: —
"In courage keep your heart,
In strength lift up your hand."

Once more we hear the word
That sickened earth of old: —
"No law except the Sword
Unsheathed and uncontrolled."
Once more it knits mankind,

Once more the nations go
To meet and break and bind
A crazed and driven foe.

Comfort, content, delight,
The ages' slow-bought gain,
They shrivelled in a night.
Only ourselves remain
To face the naked days
In silent fortitude,
Through perils and dismays
Renewed and re-renewed.
Though all we made depart,
The old Commandments stand: —
"In patience keep your heart,
In strength lift up your hand."

No easy hope or lies
Shall bring us to our goal,
But iron sacrifice
Of body, will, and soul.
There is but one task for all —
One life for each to give.
What stands if Freedom fall?
Who dies if England live?

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (1865-)

William Butler Yeats, the Irish poet and playwright, was born in Dublin, June 13, 1865; he received most of his education in Irish schools. His father was a distinguished painter and for a time he himself studied art, but at the age of twenty-one he turned definitely to literature, writing articles for Irish journals. In his twenty-third year, at the suggestion of Oscar Wilde, he came up to London, and in 1889 published his first volume of poems, *The Wanderings of Oisin.* He soon became identified with the movement for a renaissance of Irish letters — the literary aspect of Irish nationalism — and he is to-day, with Mr. George Edward Russell (the "A. E." of poetry) and Dr. Douglas Hyde, among the foremost representatives of this new Irish school. He has published many volumes of poems, plays,

and essays, and has been greatly interested in establishing and promoting an Irish literary theatre.

Mr. Yeats has not attempted to further Irish nationalism by giving literary form to the economic and political questions of the movement, but has rather endeavored — with great success — to build up a body of pure poetry of the heart, which is definitely Irish in setting, association, mood, and phrase. He has drawn his subjects in great part from ancient Irish legend and verse, and has treated these with a peculiar charm of which the constituents are romantic originality, the quintessence of emotion, often a strain of mysticism, and always a lyric elusiveness of suggestion and a haunting beauty. This charm — said to be Celtic — is evident in the very titles of his poems and works, such as *The Wind among the Reeds* (a volume of lyrics, 1889), *The Shadowy Waters* (a poetical drama, 1900), *Where there is Nothing* (another play), *The Land of Heart's Desire* (a play, 1894), *To the Rose upon the Rood of Time*, and *In the Seven Woods*. The charm, however, is by no means exclusively or distinctively Irish: both in its lighter, more elfin moods and in its deeper, more serious provocations, it is anticipated by the mystical beauty of Blake, the Pre-Raphaelites, and Shelley, and it betrays a certain kinship to the dreamy symbolism of the Belgian poet and essayist, Maeterlinck. Peculiar and captivating, it may be felt as atmosphere in many of Mr. Yeats's poems, as, for instance, in *The Wanderings of Oisin* and *The Countess Cathleen*, especially in their revised form, in the exquisite *Land of Heart's Desire*, in *The Madness of King Goll*, and in other poems too numerous to mention. The first of our selections, *The Lake Isle of Innisfree*, with its artful simplicity, soft cadences, and far-away enchantment, well illustrates the veil of beauty which this magic throws over mood and landscape. The two ballads we have selected belong to the more objective side of Mr. Yeats's work; yet in their grace of narrative — the swift, smooth, emotional way in which the story slips along — there is much of Celtic deftness, and the folk who "dance like the wave of the sea" are Irish fairy-folk and none other.

The *Poetical Works* of Mr. Yeats have been issued in two volumes (Macmillan Co., Vol. I, Lyrical Poems, 1916).

THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

THE FIDDLER OF DOONEY

When I play my fiddle in Dooney,
Folk dance like a wave of the sea;
My cousin is priest in Kilvarnet,
My brother in Moharabuiee.

I passed my brother and cousin:
They read in their books of prayer;
I read in my book of songs
I bought at the Sligo fair.

When we come at the end of time,
To Peter sitting in state,
He will smile on the three old spirits,
But call me first through the gate;

For the good are always the merry,
Save by an evil chance,
And the merry love the fiddle
And the merry love to dance:

And when the folk there spy me,
They will all come up to me,
With "Here is the fiddler of Dooney!"
And dance like a wave of the sea.

THE BALLAD OF FATHER GILLIGAN

The old priest Peter Gilligan
Was weary night and day;
For half his flock were in their beds,
Or under green sods lay.

Once, while he nodded on a chair,
At the moth-hour of eve,
Another poor man sent for him,
And he began to grieve.

"I have no rest, nor joy, nor peace,
For people die and die";
And after cried he, "God forgive!
My body spake, not I!"

He knelt, and leaning on the chair
He prayed and fell asleep;
And the moth-hour went from the fields,
And stars began to peep.

They slowly into millions grew,
And leaves shook in the wind;
And God covered the world with shade,
And whispered to mankind.

Upon the time of sparrow chirp
When the moths came once more,
The old priest Peter Gilligan
Stood upright on the floor.

"Mavrone, mavrone! the man has died,
While I slept on the chair";
He roused his horse out of its sleep,
And rode with little care.

He rode now as he never rode,
By rocky lane and fen;
The sick man's wife opened the door:
"Father! you come again!"

"And is the poor man dead?" he cried.
"He died an hour ago."
The old priest Peter Gilligan
In grief swayed to and fro.

"When you were gone, he turned and died
As merry as a bird."
The old priest Peter Gilligan
He knelt him at that word.

"He who hath made the night of stars
For souls, who tire and bleed,
Sent one of His great angels down
To help me in my need.

"He who is wrapped in purple robes,
With planets in His care,
Had pity on the least of things
Asleep upon a chair."

STEPHEN PHILLIPS (1868–1915)

Stephen Phillips was born near Oxford, July 28, 1868. Before the end of his first term at college he joined F. R. Benson's players and for six years he continued with them, playing small parts and acquiring a practical knowledge of stagecraft that was of great value to him later in writing his dramas. In 1890 appeared *Primavera*, a slender volume of verse by Phillips and his cousin, Laurence Binyon. *Eremus*, a philosophic vision in blank verse of much promise, was published in 1894, and two years later *Christ in Hades*, Phillips's first work of importance, a poetic interpretation of the hope of Christianity. A collection of *Poems* in 1897, containing *Marpessa*, *Christ in Hades*, the splendid tribute *To Milton, Blind*, and other poems,

more than justified the expectations aroused by the previous publication and brought the author fame and a prize of £100 that *The Academy* had offered for the best book of the year. In 1898 *Endymion* appeared in the *Nineteenth Century*. Then Phillips produced a series of poetical plays of preëminent beauty and much dramatic force: *Paolo and Francesca* (1900), *Herod* (1901), *Ulysses* (1902), *The Sin of David* (1904), and *Nero* (1906). *New Poems*, which included a fine appreciation of Gladstone and the beautiful *Thoughts at Sunrise, Thoughts at Noon,* and *After Rain*, was printed in 1907. Eight years later, on December 9, Phillips died.

This writer does not owe anything to the schools or movements of contemporary poetry. He can, as in *The Wife* and *The Woman with a Dead Soul*, poetize the life of the city with a realism that compares favorably with that of Henley or Davidson, but his authentic forte is far different. In imagery, it is an idealizing sensuousness of all rich sounds, colors, and forms, which associates him with poets like Milton, Keats, and Tennyson; in spirit, it is a sense of the intercommunion of nature and man in the Presence — the " gentleness that is behind the Law ": a spirit that reminds us not so vividly of Wordsworth as of the religious and mystical poets of the seventeenth century, Herbert, Crashaw, and Vaughan. To what we discover in our richest moments of the hidden beauty of nature he is most sensitive and he phrases it in music of delicate suggestion. Equally understanding and impassioned is his revelation of the human feeling that pervades the narratives of Greek mythology. He has moreover the gift of evoking sublime and shadowy pictures of epic grandeur and romantic mysticism, as in *Christ in Hades*. When he is not dealing with realistic themes his style reflects the lingering classical influence, its repression, its simplicity, its dignity, and his mood is that of reflection or elevated passion, and of undisturbed beauty. The beauty of human passion he imbues, however, with something of modern romantic emotion, not with its yearning for novelty but with a pathos distinctively his own. He does not accentuate grief as something startling and to be avoided. He embraces it. He takes comfort in the shadows of life as well as in its ever changing loveliness. In his noblest tragedies of love the keynote is the sorrow that lies at the core of love: " I have wept but on the pages of a book," says his Francesca, " And I have longed for sorrow of my own." The type of all his sweetest women is found in the Marpessa of his youthful poem. Offered by the god Apollo felicity, " existence without tears for evermore," she replies, " I being human, human sorrow miss," and gives herself to the mortal

lover, Idas. "We shall grow old together," she says, "endeared by many griefs. . . . Last, we shall descend into the natural ground — not without tears."

Sometimes Phillips may be tempted to follow false prophets into the realm of the morbid. But rarely. To the ideals of love, beauty, fellowship in suffering, charity, faith, he renders a devotion manifestly sincere. His lyrics are not the equal of his narrative and dramatic poems, for the true medium of his utterance was blank verse. That medium as made over by him owes something to Marlowe and to Milton, but its cadences are more lyrical; something to Tennyson and to Keats, but it is more dramatic in its power. He fashioned blank verse anew, and with a mastery that is individual. The John Lane Company has published Phillips's *Poems*, 1903.

MARPESSA

(*Selections*)

Marpessa, being given by Zeus her choice between the god Apollo and Idas a mortal, chose Idas.

Wounded with beauty in the summer night
Young Idas tossed upon his couch, and cried
"Marpessa, O Marpessa!" From the dark
The floating smell of flowers invisible,
The mystic yearning of the garden wet,
The moonless-passing night — into his brain
Wandered, until he rose and outward leaned
In the dim summer: 'twas the moment deep
When we are conscious of the secret dawn,
Amid the darkness that we feel is green.
To Idas had Marpessa been revealed,
Roaming with morning thoughts amid the dew,
All fresh from sleeping; and upon her cheek
The bloom of pure repose; like perfect fruit
Even at the moment was her beauty ripe.
The god Apollo from the heaven of heavens
Her mortal sweetness through the air allured;
And on this very noon she shall decide
'Twixt Idas and the god, take to herself
A brief or an eternal lover. So

When the long day that glideth without cloud,
The summer day, was at her blue deep hour
Of lilies musical with busy bliss,
When very light trembled as with excess,
And heat was frail, and every bush and flower
Was drooping in the glory overcome;
They three together met; on the one side,
Fresh from diffusing light on all the world
Apollo; on the other without sleep
Idas, and in the midst Marpessa stood.
Just as a flower after drenching rain,
So from the falling of felicity
Her human beauty glowed, and it was new;
The bee too near her bosom drowsed and dropped
But as the god sprang to embrace her, they
Heard thunder, and a little afterward
The far Paternal voice, "Let her decide."
And as a flame blown backward by a gust,
Burned to and fro in fury beautiful
The murmuring god; but at the last he spoke,
And smiled as on his favorite western isle.
"Marpessa, though no trouble, nor any pain,
So is it willed, can touch me; but I live
For ever in a deep deliberate bliss,
A spirit sliding through tranquillity;
Yet when I saw thee I imagined woe,
That thou who art so fair, shouldst ever taste
Of the earth-sorrow: for thy life has been
The history of a flower in the air,
Liable but to breezes and to time,
As rich and purposeless as is the rose:
Thy simple doom is to be beautiful.
Thee God created but to grow, not strive,
And not to suffer, merely to be sweet,
The favorite of his rains; and thou indeed
Lately upon the summer wast disclosed.
Child, wilt thou taste of grief? On thee the hours
Shall feed, and bring thy soul into the dusk:

Even now thy face is hasting to the dark! . . .
But if thou'lt live with me, then shalt thou bide
In mere felicity above the world,
In peace alive and moving, where to stir
Is ecstasy, and thrilling is repose. . . .
Then wilt thou die? Part with eternal thoughts,
Lie without any hope beneath the grass,
All thy imaginations in the dust?
And all that tint and melody and breath,
Which in their lovely unison are thou,
To be dispersed upon the whirling sands!
Thy soul blown seaward on nocturnal blast!
O brief and breathing creature, wilt thou cease
Once having been? Thy doom doth make thee rich,
And the low grave doth make thee exquisite.
But if thou'lt live with me, then will I kiss
Warm immortality into thy lips;
And I will carry thee above the world,
To share my ecstasy of flinging beams,
And scattering without intermission joy.
And thou shalt know that first leap of the sea
Toward me; the grateful upward look of earth,
Emerging roseate from her bath of dew, —
We two in heaven dancing, — Babylon
Shall flash and murmur, and cry from under us,
And Nineveh catch fire, and at our feet
Be hurled with her inhabitants, and all
Adoring Asia kindle and hugely bloom; —
We two in heaven running, — continents
Shall lighten, ocean unto ocean flash,
And rapidly laugh till all this world is warm.
Or since thou art a woman, thou shalt have
More tender tasks. . . .
Or, — for I know thy heart, — a dearer toil, —
To lure into the air a face long sick,
To gild the brow that from its dead looks up,
To shine on the unforgiven of this world;
With slow sweet surgery restore the brain,

And to dispel shadows and shadowy fear."
When he had spoken, humbly Idas said:
" After such argument what can I plead?
Or what pale promise make? Yet since it is
In women to pity rather than to aspire,
A little I will speak. I love thee then
Not only for thy body packed with sweet
Of all this world, that cup of brimming June,
That jar of violet wine set in the air,
That palest rose sweet in the night of life;
Nor for that stirring bosom all besieged
By drowsing lovers, or thy perilous hair;
Nor for that face that might indeed provoke
Invasion of old cities; no, nor all
Thy freshness stealing on me like strange sleep.
Not for this only do I love thee, but
Because Infinity upon thee broods;
And thou art full of whispers and of shadows.
Thou meanest what the sea has striven to say
So long, and yearnèd up the cliffs to tell;
Thou art what all the winds have uttered not,
What the still night suggesteth to the heart.
Thy voice is like to music heard ere birth,
Some spirit lute touched on a spirit sea;
Thy face remembered is from other worlds,
It has been died for, though I know not when,
It has been sung of, though I know not where. . . .
O beauty lone and like a candle clear
In this dark country of the world! Thou art
My woe, my early light, my music dying."
As he was speaking, she with lips apart
Breathed, and with dimmer eyes leaned through the air
As one in dream, and now his human hand
Took in her own; and to Apollo spoke:
" O gradual rose of the dim universe!
Whose warmth steals through the grave unto the dead,
Soul of the early sky, the priest of bloom!
Who beautifully goest in the West,

Attracting as to an eternal home
The yearning soul! . . .
Fain would I know
Yon heavenly wafting through the heaven wide,
And the large view of the subjected seas,
And famous cities, and the various toil
Of men: all Asia at my feet spread out
In indolent magnificence of bloom!
Africa in her matted hair obscured,
And India in meditation plunged!
Then the delight of flinging the sunbeams,
Diffusing silent bliss; and yet more sweet, —
To cherish fruit on the warm wall; to raise
Out of the tomb to glory the pale wheat,
Serene ascension by the rain prepared;
To work with the benignly falling hours,
And beautiful slow Time. But dearest, this,
To gild the face that from its dead looks up,
To shine on the rejected, and arrive
To women that remember in the night;
Or mend with sweetest surgery the mind.
And yet, forgive me if I can but speak
Most human words. Of immortality
Thou singest: thou would'st hold me from the ground,
And this just opening beauty from the grave.
As yet I have known no sorrow; all my days
Like perfect lilies under water stir,
And God has sheltered me from his own wind;
The darling of his breezes have I been.
Yet as to one inland, that dreameth lone,
Sea-faring men with their sea-weary eyes,
Round the inn-fire tell of some foreign land;
So agèd men, much tossed about in life,
Have told me of that country, Sorrow far.
How many goodly ships at anchor lie
Within her ports; even to me indeed
Hath a sea-rumor through the night been borne.
And I myself remember, and have heard,

Of men that did believe, women that loved
That were unhappy long and now are dead,
With wounds that no eternity can close,
Life had so marked them; or of others who
Panted toward their end, and fell on death
Even as sobbing runners breast the rope.
And most I remember of all human things
My mother; often as a child I pressed
My face against her cheek, and felt her tears;
Even as she smiled on me, her eyes would fill,
Until my own grew ignorantly wet;
And I in silence wondered at sorrow.
When I remember this, how shall I know
That I myself may not, by sorrow taught,
Accept the perfect stillness of the ground? . . .
Or if there be some other world, with no
Bloom, neither rippling sound, nor early smell,
Nor leaves, nor pleasant exchange of human speech;
Only a dreadful pacing to and fro
Of spirits meditating on the sun;
A land of barèd boughs and grieving wind;
Yet would I not forego the doom, the place,
Whither my poets and my heroes went
Before me; warriors that with deeds forlorn
Saddened my youth, yet made it great to live;
Lonely antagonists of Destiny,
That went down scornful before many spears,
Who soon as we are born, are straight our friends;
And live in simple music, country songs,
And mournful ballads by the winter fire.
Since they have died; their death is ever mine;
I would not lose it. Then, thou speak'st of joy,
Of immortality without one sigh,
Existence without tears for evermore.
Thou would'st preserve me from the anguish, lest
This holy face into the dark return.
Yet I being human, human sorrow miss.
The half of music, I have heard men say,

Is to have grieved; when comes the lonely wail
Over the mind; old men have told it me
Subdued after long life by simple sounds. . . .
To all this sorrow was I born, and since
Out of a human womb I came, I am
Not eager to forego it; I would scorn
To elude the heaviness and take the joy,
For pain came with the sap, pangs with the bloom:
This is the sting, the wonder. Yet should I
Linger beside thee in felicity,
Sliding with open eyes through liquid bliss
For ever; still I must grow old. Ah I
Should ail beside thee, Apollo, and should note
With eyes that would not be, but yet are dim,
Ever so slight a change from day to day
In thee my husband; watch thee nudge thyself
To little offices that once were sweet:
Slow where thou once wert swift, remembering
To kiss those lips which once thou couldst not leave. . . .
But if I live with Idas, then we two
On the low earth shall prosper hand in hand
In odors of the open field, and live
In peaceful noises of the farm, and watch
The pastoral fields burned by the setting sun.
And he shall give me passionate children, not
Some radiant god that will despise me quite,
But clambering limbs and little hearts that err. . . .
And though the first sweet sting of love be past,
The sweet that almost venom is; though youth,
With tender and extravagant delight,
The first and secret kiss by twilight hedge,
The insane farewell repeated o'er and o'er,
Pass off; there shall succeed a faithful peace;
Beautiful friendship tried by sun and wind,
Durable from the daily dust of life.
And though with sadder, still with kinder eyes,
We shall behold all frailties, we shall haste
To pardon, and with mellowing minds to bless.

Then though we must grow old, we shall grow old
Together, and he shall not greatly miss
My bloom faded, and waning light of eyes,
Too deeply gazed in ever to seem dim;
Nor shall we murmur at, nor much regret
The years that gently bend us to the ground,
And gradually incline our face; that we
Leisurely stooping, and with each slow step,
May curiously inspect our lasting home.
But we shall sit with luminous holy smiles,
Endeared by many griefs, by many a jest,
And custom sweet of living side by side;
And full of memories not unkindly glance
Upon each other. Last, we shall descend
Into the natural ground — not without tears —
One must go first, ah god! one must go first;
After so long one blow for both were good;
Still like old friends, glad to have met, and leave
Behind a wholesome memory on the earth.
And thou, beautiful god, in that far time,
When in thy setting sweet thou gazest down
On this grey head, wilt thou remember then
That once I pleased thee, that I once was young?"
When she had spoken, Idas with one cry
Held her, and there was silence; while the god
In anger disappeared. Then slowly they,
He looking downward, and she gazing up,
Into the evening green wandered away.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

1. GEORGIAN POETRY

In December, 1912, the POETRY BOOKSHOP of London issued under the title *Georgian Poetry 1911–1912*, a collection of poems that had been published since the accession of George V in 1910. The Preface opens with these words: "This volume is issued in the belief that English poetry is now once again putting on a new strength and beauty . . . and that we are at the beginning of another 'Georgian period' which may take rank in due time with the several great poetic ages of the past." Whether or not this expectation will be realized remains to be seen, and if the universal disturbance of old customs and ideas brought on by the Great War has made the hope keener, it has made prophecy harder. What may be the subjects, the mood, the manner of the new poetry and who may be the proved fire-bringers it is too soon to say. The genius of such writers as WALTER DE LA MARE, ALFRED NOYES, JOHN MASEFIELD, JAMES STEPHENS, W. W. GIBSON, SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN, RUPERT BROOKE, JOHN DRINKWATER, LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE, W. H. DAVIES, and others has enriched English poetry with novel and varied strains, and in some cases also with volume of production, but we cannot determine the scope of those who still live and write, or label them according to schools and tendencies, or foresee the ultimate quality of their contribution to English poetry. Each has his distinctive art, his peculiar merit; but each continues to show new powers or, at least, new phases of power. We may, therefore, pass at once to the consideration of several of them as individuals. For the convenience of readers poems treating of the War have been placed in a separate section, succeeding this.

WALTER DE LA MARE (1873–)

From Professor W. L. Phelps's interesting review, *The Advance of English Poetry in the Twentieth Century* (N. Y., 1918, Dodd, Mead, & Co.), we quote the following: "Walter de la Mare, a close personal

friend of Rupert Brooke, came of Huguenot, English, and Scotch ancestry, and was born at Charlton, Kent, on the twenty-fifth of April, 1873. He was educated at St. Paul's Cathedral Choir School. Although known to-day exclusively as a poet, he has written much miscellaneous prose — critical articles for periodicals, short stories, and a few plays. His first poetry-book, *Songs of Childhood*, appeared in 1902; in 1906, *Poems;* in 1910, *The Return*, which won the Edmond de Polignac prize; *The Listeners*, which gave him wide reputation, appeared in 1912; *Peacock Pie* [children's verses], in 1913, and *Motley and Other Poems* in 1918."

Mr. De la Mare's poetry is not a contribution by way of revolt, prophecy, or argument to the mighty economic and philosophical debates of the present age; neither is it a mere reminiscence of the great singing measures of the earlier Victorian masters. Quietly, lovingly, without being turned from his purpose by pain of criticism or pursuit of applause, he has pursued in his own fashion his chosen subjects: the ways, fancies, and memories of childhood; old familiar faces and places, or well-known characters in books, as Shakespeare's; the sequence of the seasons and the procession of flowers; our mystical kinship with the powers and presences of nature that reason cannot apprehend or analyze. He has a gift for revealing the romance of innocence. But after all, as one critic has well remarked, it is because he is a child of his age that he has observed children so lovingly. All young people delight in his poetry, because of its bewitching and unexpected fancy, its divination of what they thought they alone had discovered, its moving images, its unequalled music. His method is very largely descriptive and he has a genius for perceiving salient details in very different subjects, yet all his work reveals a certain inimitable delicacy and tact, a lovely and graceful sympathy, almost shy, when he hints at the intangible quintessence of his subject, — be it the child's account of how "he came" as a wee bird, or the child's sense of a living presence in the little green orchard, or the melancholy of the "widowed" donkey, Nicholas Nye, brooding like a ghost, "as still as a post," or the tender, lovely things, "clear flowers and tiny wings," that cheer Poor Miss 7, or the weird realism of that oblivious reader of romance, Old Susan. These memories and interpretations are priceless, for they have that rare quality of excellence — they become one's own as soon as they have been read. They have inevitability. The quiet and almost supernatural beauty of his poems appeals, even more than to children, to those who have had some experience of life and know how rarely one has a glimpse of perfection, how much more

rarely one can capture that glimpse. It is no exaggeration to say that in music, imagery, phrase and magical insight his lyrics are as lovely as any in the language. They awaken in those who no longer are children faculties long since disused. They restore to us the mood of kindly attention to the subtle, gracious, unworded things that are present about us, on every hand. We too, to copy the title of his most important book, become Listeners, while the untrammelled, unhurried soul gathers a blessing from the simple ways of trees and birds, children and animals, old faces and old habits, and from the never aging sympathies of the heart. Recently, a writer in the London *Times* has said of Mr. De la Mare that he is "one of the greatest of modern poets." From such sweeping attribution of eminence we are sure that Mr. De la Mare would instinctively shrink. Greatness is for the generations to decide. Of the Georgian poets he is the most exquisitely imaginative and musical, because his Muse is the most artistically conscientious: selective of its themes and frugal of its bird-like notes. With the further assertion that "of all our English poets there is none who has written with more of the child's strange freshness of imagination" many, though mindful of the merit of Stevenson, will agree.

POEMS FROM PEACOCK PIE [1]

I. THE LITTLE BIRD

My dear Daddie bought a mansion
  For to bring my Mammie to,
In a hat with a long feather,
  And a trailing gown of blue;
And a company of fiddlers
  And a rout of maids and men
Danced the clock round to the morning,
  In a gay house-warming then.
And when all the guests were gone, and
  All was still as still can be,
In from the dark ivy hopped a
  Wee small bird: and that was Me.

[1] The following poems from Mr. De la Mare's *Peacock Pie* and *The Listeners* are printed with the permission of the publisher, Henry Holt and Co.

II. THE LITTLE GREEN ORCHARD

Some one is always sitting there,
In the little green orchard;
Even when the sun is high
In noon's unclouded sky,
And faintly droning goes
The bee from rose to rose,
Some one in shadow is sitting there,
In the little green orchard.

Yes, and when twilight's falling softly
On the little green orchard;
When the grey dew distils
And every flower-cup fills;
When the last blackbird says,
'What-what!' and goes her way — ssh!
I have heard voices calling softly
In the little green orchard.

Not that I am afraid of being there,
In the little green orchard, —
Why, when the moon's been bright,
Shedding her lonesome light,
And moths like ghosties come,
And the hornèd snail leaves home:
I've sat there, whispering and listening there,
In the little green orchard.

Only it's strange to be feeling there,
In the little green orchard;
Whether you paint or draw,
Dig, hammer, chop, or saw;
When you are most alone,
All but the silence gone . . .
Some one is waiting and watching there,
In the little green orchard.

III. NICHOLAS NYE

Thistle and darnel and dock grew there,
  And a bush, in the corner, of may,
On the orchard wall I used to sprawl
  In the blazing heat of the day;
Half asleep and half awake,
  While the birds went twittering by,
And nobody there my lone to share
    But Nicholas Nye.

Nicholas Nye was lean and grey,
  Lame of a leg and old,
More than a score of donkey's years
  He had seen since he was foaled;
He munched the thistles, purple and spiked,
  Would sometimes stoop and sigh,
And turn to his head, as if he said,
    "Poor Nicholas Nye!"

Alone with his shadow he'd drowse in the meadow,
  Lazily swinging his tail,
At break of day he used to bray, —
  Not much too hearty and hale;
But a wonderful gumption was under his skin,
  And a clear calm light in his eye,
And once in a while: he'd smile: —
    Would Nicholas Nye.

Seem to be smiling at me, he would,
  From his bush in the corner, of may, —
Bony and ownerless, widowed and worn,
  Knobble-kneed, lonely and grey;
And over the grass would seem to pass
  'Neath the deep dark blue of the sky,
Something much better than words between me
    And Nicholas Nye.

But dusk would come in the apple boughs,
The green of the glow-worm shine,
The birds in nest would crouch to rest,
And home I'd trudge to mine;
And there, in the moonlight, dark with dew,
Asking not wherefore nor why,
Would brood like a ghost, and as still as a post,
Old Nicholas Nye.

IV. POOR "MISS 7"

Lone and alone she lies,
Poor Miss 7,
Five steep flights from the earth,
And one from heaven;
Dark hair and dark brown eyes, —
Not to be sad she tries,
Still — still it's lonely lies
Poor Miss 7.

One day-long watch hath she,
Poor Miss 7,
Not in some orchard sweet
In April Devon, —
Just four blank walls to see,
And dark come shadowily,
No moon, no stars, ah me!
Poor Miss 7.

And then to wake again,
Poor Miss 7,
To the cold night, to have
Sour physic given;
Out of some dream of pain,
Then strive long hours in vain
Deep dreamless sleep to gain:
Poor Miss 7.

Yet memory softly sings
  Poor Miss 7
Songs full of love and peace
  And gladness even;
Clear flowers and tiny wings,
All tender, lovely things,
Hope to her bosom brings —
  Happy Miss 7.

V. TIT FOR TAT

Have you been catching of fish, Tom Noddy?
  Have you snared a weeping hare?
Have you whistled, "No Nunny," and gunned a poor bunny,
  Or a blinded bird of the air?

Have you trod like a murderer through the green woods,
  Through the dewy deep dingles and glooms,
While every small creature screamed shrill to Dame Nature,
  "He comes — and he comes!"

Wonder I very much do, Tom Noddy,
  If ever, when you are a-roam,
An Ogre from space will stoop a lean face,
  And lug you home:

Lug you home over his fence, Tom Noddy,
  Of thorn-stocks nine yards high,
With your bent knees strung round his old iron gun
  And your head dan-dangling by:

And hang you up stiff on a hook, Tom Noddy,
  From a stone-cold pantry shelf,
Whence your eyes will glare in an empty stare,
  Till you are cooked yourself!

VI. THE TRUANTS

Ere my heart beats too coldly and faintly
To remember sad things, yet be gay,
I would sing a brief song of the world's little children
Magic hath stolen away.

The primroses scattered by April,
The stars of the wide Milky Way,
Cannot outnumber the hosts of the children
Magic hath stolen away.

The buttercup green of the meadows,
The snow of the blossoming may,
Lovelier are not than the legions of children
Magic hath stolen away.

The waves tossing surf in the moonbeam,
The albatross lone on the spray,
Alone know the tears wept in vain for the children
Magic hath stolen away.

In vain: for at hush of the evening,
When the stars twinkle into the grey,
Seems to echo the far-away calling of children
Magic hath stolen away.

VII. ALL BUT BLIND

All but blind
In his chambered hole
Gropes for worms
The four-clawed Mole.

All but blind
In the evening sky
The hooded Bat
Twirls softly by.

All but blind
  In the burning day
The Barn-Owl blunders
  On her way.

And blind as are
  These three to me,
So, blind to Some-one
  I must be.

MISS LOO

When thin-strewn memory I look through,
I see most clearly poor Miss Loo,
Her tabby cat, her cage of birds,
Her nose, her hair — her muffled words,
And how she'd open her green eyes,
As if in some immense surprise,
Whenever, as we sat at tea,
She made some small remark to me.

It's always drowsy summer when
From out the past she comes again;
The westering sunshine in a pool
Floats in her parlor still and cool;
While the slim bird its lean wires shakes,
As into piercing song it breaks;
Till Peter's pale-green eyes ajar
Dream, wake; wake, dream, in one brief bar;
And I am sitting, dull and shy,
And she with gaze of vacancy,
And large hands folded on the tray,
Musing the afternoon away;
Her satin bosom heaving slow
With sighs that softly ebb and flow,
And her plain face in such dismay,
It seems unkind to look her way:

Until all cheerful back will come
Her cheerful gleaming spirit home:
And one would think that poor Miss Loo
Asked nothing else, if she had you.

OLD SUSAN

When Susan's work was done she'd sit,
With one fat guttering candle lit,
And window opened wide to win
The sweet night air to enter in;
There, with a thumb to keep her place
She'd read, with stern and wrinkled face,
Her mild eyes gliding very slow
Across the letters to and fro,
While wagged the guttering candle flame
In the wind that through the window came.
And sometimes in the silence she
Would mumble a sentence audibly,
Or shake her head as if to say,
"You silly souls, to act this way!"
And never a sound from night I'd hear,
Unless some far-off cock crowed clear;
Or her old shuffling thumb should turn
Another page; and rapt and stern,
Through her great glasses bent on me
She'd glance into reality;
And shake her round old silvery head,
With — "You! — I thought you was in bed!" —
Only to tilt her book again,
And rooted in Romance remain.

JOHN MASEFIELD (1874-)

John Masefield, the most successful poet of the life of the common people of England, has had a career of romantic interest. He was born in the west of England, at Ledbury, in 1874. He was trained for the sea, but had a good lower-school education, was fond of poetry, and

wrote verses from the time he was nine years old. "He ran away from home, shipped as cabin boy on a sailing vessel, spent some years before the mast, tramped on foot through various countries, turned up in New York, worked in the old Columbia Hotel in Greenwich Avenue, and had plenty of opportunity to study human nature in the bar-room. Then he entered a carpet factory in the Bronx. But he was the last man in the world to become a carpet knight. He bought [in 1896] a copy of Chaucer's poems, stayed up till dawn reading it, and for the first time was sure of his future occupation. . . . While he draws his themes and his heroes from his own experience, his inspiration as a poet comes directly from Chaucer, who died in 1400. He is, indeed, the Chaucer of to-day; the most closely akin to Chaucer — not only in temperament, but in literary manner — of all the writers of the twentieth century" (W. L. Phelps, *Advance of English Poetry in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 71–73).

Mr. Masefield's longer poems interest the boy at play, the man on the street, and the girl in the shop who have read short-stories and adventure novels but have always been bored by "poetry." His narratives are thrilling in plot and situation, the characters are tremendously real and passionate — "men of the tattered battalion which fights till it dies"; the diction is direct, colloquial, and forceful, the manner realistic, and the motive always true to life. His appeal is instantaneous. He begins his stories very simply, in a conversational style, like Chaucer, and takes you into his confidence at once; step by step he builds up dramatic interest: with vivid details a character is revealed whom one must know more of, or a situation which compels one to follow to the finish. Then the reader is in the very midst of rapid action. It fills his ears, dazzles his sight, and rains blows upon his head. The characters run away with him as they do with the story. The language of passion drums and then turns to thunder and lightning. Out of his own experiences with the scorned and rejected the poet creates men and women of the masses — many brutal, all passionate, driven by their desires or driving by their will — elemental, inevitable, tragic. Out of his own experience he summons the tasks and moments that try men's souls, — that gather men up in a whirlwind and toss them like rags and splinters, and leave them for what they are — masters or failures. Always, calm and imperturbable in the background or participating in the event, is nature, responsive to the poet's intimate touch. *Dauber*, written in 1912, is such a story, and so too are *The Everlasting Mercy*

and *The Widow in the Bye Street* (1911) and *The Daffodil Fields* (1912). It would be hard to find a poem more sublime in its description of the sea, more nobly pathetic in its portrayal of devotion to an ideal than *Dauber*. Entirely different in theme from these, but not in spirit, is the realistic and breathlessly interesting hunting story, *Reynard the Fox* (1919), in which the hunted is the hero, issuing triumphant. By many this is regarded as the most characteristic of Mr. Masefield's productions. Whoever reads these poems forgets not only any prejudice he may have had against "poetry" but also realizes that the stories would lose an indescribable but essential something were they turned into prose. One is transported to the realm of imagination, feels the creative power of poetry, and recognizes that this poet is a master of his art. It is significant, too, that Mr. Masefield accomplishes his rhythmic effects not by ostentatiously revolting from symmetry in metrical design but by using the old-time verse forms and stanzas: as in *Dauber*, *The Widow in the Bye Street*, and, with a slight variation, in *Daffodil Fields*, Chaucer's harmonious arrangement, the rhyme royal; or, as in *The River*, *The Wanderer*, and *August, 1914*, the four-line stanza of Gray's *Elegy;* or, as in *Rosas*, the six-line stanza of *Rule Britannia;* or, as in *The Everlasting Mercy*, the tetrameter couplet.

In *A Consecration* Mr. Masefield dedicates his genius to the "just plain-folk," — the army of privates of whom he is the laureate by special gift and knowledge. Other poems of the same sort of subject and with the same vivid picturing may be found in *Salt-Water Ballads* and in *The Story of a Round House*. *The Wanderer*, on the other hand, is one of the quietest of his many songs of the sea. Noblest of his poems, and one of the most profound of modern poems of war and love of country, is *August, 1914*. It recalls Gray's *Elegy* not only by its metre but by its spirituality, and it graciously renews the magnanimity and benediction of the older poem for these later days that have indeed tried men's souls. But through all Mr. Masefield's work, as through his Dauber's quest, no matter how sordid the life or vain the effort, there breathes an inspiration and consolation supreme, — the "joy of trying for beauty, the balm of this world's way." This is for him, as for Mr. Bridges, Mr. Kipling, Mr. De la Mare, and all true poets, the imperishable theme. Beauty of nature, of human energy, of emotion, of suffering, of heroism, of the soul not found wanting, — of such is the deep heart and guidance of poetry. In the Preface to his *Collected Poems* (Macmillan, 1919) Mr. Masefield has said: "Chaucer and Shakespeare, some lines of Gray, of

Keats, of Wordsworth and of William Morris, the depth, force, beauty and tenderness of the English mind, are inspiration enough, and school enough and star enough to urge and guide in any night of the soul, however wayless from our blindness or black from our passions and our follies."

Mr. Masefield has written also excellent sonnets, dramas, and novels, and prose of the Great War.

A CONSECRATION [1]

Not of the princes and prelates with periwigged charioteers
Riding triumphantly laurelled to lap the fat of the years, —
Rather the scorned — the rejected — the men hemmed in with the spears;

The men of the tattered battalion which fights till it dies,
Dazed with the dust of the battle, the din and the cries,
The men with the broken heads and the blood running into their eyes.

Not the be-medalled Commander, beloved of the throne,
Riding cock-horse to parade when the bugles are blown,
But the lads who carried the koppie and cannot be known.

Not the ruler for me, but the ranker, the tramp of the road,
The slave with the sack on his shoulders pricked on with the goad,
The man with too weighty a burden, too weary a load.

The sailor, the stoker of steamers, the man with the clout,
The chantyman bent at the halliards putting a tune to the shout,
The drowsy man at the wheel and the tired lookout.

Others may sing of the wine and the wealth and the mirth,
The portly presence of potentates goodly in girth; —
Mine be the dirt and the dross, the dust and scum of the earth!

[1] This and the two following poems are from Mr. Masefield's *Collected Poems and Plays*, Vol. I, *Poems*, by permission of The Macmillan Co.

Theirs be the music, the color, the glory, the gold;
Mine be a handful of ashes, a mouthful of mould.
Of the maimed, of the halt and the blind in the rain and the cold —
Of these shall my songs be fashioned, my tales be told.

DAUBER

(*Selections*)

He was the painter in that swift ship's crew,
Lampman and painter — tall, a slight-built man,
Young for his years, and not yet twenty-two;
Sickly, and not yet brown with the sea's tan.
Bullied and damned at since the voyage began,
" Being neither man nor seaman by his tally,"
He bunked with the idlers just abaft the galley.

His work began at five; he worked all day,
Keeping no watch and having all night in.
His work was what the mate might care to say;
He mixed red lead in many a bouilli tin;
His dungarees were smeared with paraffin.
" Go drown himself " his round-mates advised him,
And all hands called him " Dauber " and despised him. . . .

Si talked with Dauber, standing by the side.
" Why did you come to sea, painter? " he said.
" I want to be a painter," he replied,
" And know the sea and ships from A to Z,
And paint great ships at sea before I'm dead;
Ships under skysails running down the Trade —
Ships and the sea; there's nothing finer made.

" But there's so much to learn, with sails and ropes,
And how the sails look, full or being furled,
And how the lights change in the troughs and slopes,

And the sea's colors up and down the world,
And how a storm looks when the sprays are hurled
High as the yard (they say) I want to see;
There's none ashore can teach such things to me.

"And then the men and rigging, and the way
Ships move, running or beating, and the poise
At the roll's end, the checking in the sway —
I want to paint them perfect, short of the noise;
And then the life, the half-decks full of boys,
The fo'c's'les with the men there, dripping wet;
I know the subjects that I want to get.

"It's not been done, the sea, not yet been done,
From the inside, by one who really knows;
I'd give up all if I could be the one,
But art comes dear the way the money goes.
So I have come to sea, and I suppose
Three years will teach me all I want to learn
And make enough to keep me till I earn . . .

"I cannot get it yet — not yet," he said;
"That leap and light, and sudden change to green,
And all the glittering from the sunset's red,
And the milky colors where the bursts have been,
And then the clipper striding like a queen
Over it all, all beauty to the crown.
I see it all, I cannot put it down.

"It's hard not to be able. There, look there!
I cannot get the movement nor the light;
Sometimes it almost makes a man despair
To try and try and never get it right.
Oh, if I could — oh, if I only might,
I wouldn't mind what hells I'd have to pass,
Not if the whole world called me fool and ass." . . .

The Cook objects to the smell of Dauber's wet paintings in the round-house. The lad hides them under a boat on the deck-house

top and goes to bed. Si and other apprentices smear them with turpentine, and lay them back under the boat.

All he had drawn since first he came to sea,
His six weeks' leisure fruits, they laid them there.
They chuckled then to think how mad he'd be
Finding his paintings vanished into air.
Eight bells were struck, and feet from everywhere
Went shuffling aft to muster in the dark;
The mate's pipe glowed above, a dim red spark. . . .

Down in his bunk the Dauber lay awake
Thinking of his unfitness for the sea.
Each failure, each derision, each mistake,
There in the life not made for such as he;
A morning grim with trouble sure to be,
A noon of pain from failure, and a night
Bitter with men's contemning and despite.

This in the first beginning, the green leaf,
Still in the Trades before bad weather fell;
What harvest would he reap of hate and grief
When the loud Horn made every life a hell?
When the sick ship lay over, clanging her bell,
And no time came for painting or for drawing,
But all hands fought, and icy death came clawing? . . .

He turned out of his bunk; the Cook still tossed,
One of the other two spoke in his sleep.
A cockroach scuttled where the moonbeam crossed;
Outside there was the ship, the night, the deep.
"It is worth while," the youth said; "I will keep
To my resolve, I'll learn to paint all this.
My Lord, my God, how beautiful it is!" . . .

Next day was Sunday, his free painting day,
While the fine weather held, from eight till eight.
He rose when called at five, and did array

The round-house gear, and set the kit-bags straight;
Then kneeling down, like housemaid at a grate,
He scrubbed the deck with sand until his knees
Were blue with dye from his wet dungarees.

He goes to fetch his drawings.

Up to the deck-house top he quickly climbed,
He stooped to find them underneath the boat.
He found them all obliterated, slimed,
Blotted, erased, gone from him line and note.
They were all spoiled; a lump came in his throat,
Being vain of his attempts, and tender skinned —
Beneath the skylight watching reefers grinned.

Sam, one of the apprentices, derisively suggests that he complain to the Captain.

"Painter," the Captain called; the Dauber came.
"What's all this talk of drawings? What's the matter?"
"They spoiled my drawings, sir." "Well, who's to blame?
The long-boat's there for no one to get at her;
You broke the rules, and if you choose to scatter
Gear up and down where it's no right to be,
And suffer as result, don't come to me." . . .

The Dauber touched his brow and slunk away —
They eyed his going with a bitter eye.
"Dauber," said Sam, "what did the Captain say?"
The Dauber drooped his head without reply.
"Go forward, Dauber, and enjoy your cry." . . .

He bowed his head, the house was full of smoke;
The Sails was pointing shackles on his chest.
"Lord, Dauber, be a man and take a joke" —
He puffed his pipe — "and let the matter rest.
Spit brown, my son, and get a hairy breast;
Get shoulders on you at the crojick braces,
And let this painting business go to blazes." . . .

The Dauber did not answer; time was passing.
He pulled his easel out, his paints, his stool.
The wind was dropping, and the sea was glassing —
New realms of beauty waited for his rule;
The draught out of the crojick kept him cool.
He sat to paint, alone and melancholy.
" No turning fools," the Chips said, " from their folly."

He dipped his brush and tried to fix a line,
And then came peace, and gentle beauty came,
Turning his spirit's water into wine,
Lightening his darkness with a touch of flame:
O, joy of trying for beauty, ever the same,
You never fail, your comforts never end;
O, balm of this world's way; O, perfect friend! . . .

Out of the air a time of quiet came,
Calm fell upon the heaven like a drouth;
The brass sky watched the brassy water flame.
Drowsed as a snail the clipper loitered south
Slowly, with no white bone across her mouth;
No rushing glory, like a queen made bold,
The Dauber strove to draw her as she rolled. . . .

He watched it, painting patiently, as paints,
With eyes that pierce behind the blue sky's veil,
The Benedictine in a Book of Saints
Watching the passing of the Holy Grail;
The green dish dripping blood, the trump, the hail,
The spears that pass, the memory and the passion,
The beauty moving under this world's fashion.

But as he painted, slowly, man by man,
The seamen gathered near; the Bosun stood
Behind him, jeering; then the Sails began
Sniggering with comment that it was not good.
Chips flicked his sketch with little scraps of wood,
Saying, " That hit the top-knot," every time.
Cook mocked, " My lovely drawings; it's a crime." . . .

" That's sense," said all; " you cannot, why pretend? "
The Dauber rose and put his easel by.
" You've said enough," he said, " now let it end.
Who cares how bad my painting may be? I
Mean to go on, and, if I fail, to try.
However much I miss of my intent,
If I have done my best I'll be content.

" You cannot understand that. Let it be.
You cannot understand, nor know, nor share.
This is a matter touching only me;
My sketch may be a daub, for aught I care.
You may be right. But even if you were,
Your mocking should not stop this work of mine;
Rot though it be, its prompting is divine." . . .

And still the Dauber strove, though all men mocked,
To draw the splendor of the passing thing,
And deep inside his heart a something locked,
Long pricking in him, now began to sting —
A fear of the disasters storm might bring;
His rank as painter would be ended then —
He would keep watch and watch like other men. . . .

Once in the passage he had worked aloft,
Shifting her suits one summer afternoon,
In the bright Trade wind, when the wind was soft,
Shaking the points, making the tackle croon.
But that was child's play to the future; soon
He would be ordered up when sails and spars
Were flying and going mad among the stars.

He had been scared that first time, daunted, thrilled,
Not by the height so much as by the size,
And then the danger to the man unskilled
In standing on a rope that runs through eyes.
" But in a storm," he thought, " the yards will rise
And roll together down, and snap their gear! "
The sweat came cold upon his palms for fear. . . .

And then he wondered if the tales were lies
Told by old hands to terrify the new,
For, since the ship left England, only twice
Had there been need to start a sheet or clew,
Then only royals, for an hour or two,
And no seas broke aboard, nor was it cold.
What were these gales of which the stories told?

The thought went by. He had heard the Bosun tell
Too often, and too fiercely, not to know
That being off the Horn in June is hell:
Hell of continual toil in ice and snow,
Frostbitten hell in which the westers blow
Shrieking for days on end, in which the seas
Gulf the starved seamen till their marrows freeze.

He resolves firmly to set his teeth, do his duty. Then a thought occurs to him:

That this, and so much like it, of man's toil,
Compassed by naked manhood in strange places,
Was all heroic, but outside the coil
Within which modern art gleams or grimaces;
That if he drew that line of sailors' faces
Sweating the sail, their passionate play and change,
It would be new, and wonderful, and strange.

That that was what his work meant; it would be
A training in new vision — a revealing
Of passionate men in battle with the sea,
High on an unseen stage, shaking and reeling;
And men through him would understand their feeling,
Their might, their misery, their tragic power,
And all by suffering pain a little hour.

"Lock up your paints," the Mate said, "this is the Horn; you'll join my watch to-night." The night passed, but no morning broke. Then came the cry, "All hands on deck!"

" Up ! " said the Mate. " Mizen top-gallants. Hurry ! "
The Dauber ran, the others ran, the sails
Slatted and shook ; out of the black a flurry
Whirled in fine lines, tattering the edge to trails.
Painting and art and England were old tales
Told in some other life to that pale man,
Who struggled with white fear and gulped and ran.

He struck a ringbolt in his haste and fell —
Rose, sick with pain, half-lamed in his left knee ;
He reached the shrouds where clambering men pell-mell
Hustled each other up and cursed him ; he
Hurried aloft with them : then from the sea
Came a cold, sudden breath that made the hair
Stiff on the neck, as though Death whispered there.

The men kick him as they clamber by. He reaches the masthead; plays his part manfully. All sense of hands and feet lost with the icy cold he is almost swept overboard when he descends. He declines his lot of rum because he is " temperance."

His bunk was sopping wet ; he clambered in.
None of his clothes were dry ; his fear recurred.
Cramps bunched the muscles underneath his skin.
The great ship rolled until the lamp was blurred.
He took his Bible and tried to read a word ;
Trembled at going aloft again, and then
Resolved to fight it out and show it to men.

Again the shout, "All hands on deck!" " This is the end," he mutters, " I'll never keep my hold."

And then the thought came : " I'm a failure. All
My life has been a failure. They were right.
It will not matter if I go and fall ;
I should be free then from this hell's delight.
I'll never paint. Best let it end to-night.
I'll slip over the side. I've tried and failed."
So in the ice-cold in the night he quailed.

Death would be better, death, than this long hell
Of mockery and surrender and dismay —
This long defeat of doing nothing well,
Playing the part too high for him to play.
" O Death ! who hides the sorry thing away,
Take me ; I've failed. I cannot play these cards."
There came a thundering from the topsail yards.

And then he bit his lips, clenching his mind,
And staggered out to muster, beating back
The coward frozen self of him that whined.
Come what cards might he meant to play the pack.
" Ai ! " screamed the wind ; the topsail sheet went clack ;
Ice filled the air with spikes ; the grey-backs burst.
" Here's Dauber," said the Mate, " on deck the first.

" Why, holy sailor, Dauber, you're a man !
I took you for a soldier. Up now, come ! "
Up on the yards already they began
That battle with a gale which strikes men dumb.
The leaping topsail thundered like a drum.
The frozen snow beat in the face like shots.
The wind spun whipping wave-crests into clots. . . .

A month more of this. Cape Horn is rounded. The Dauber has " got manhood." All treat him with respect. A mighty wester blows : Dauber is the first man to his sail. " There came a gust, the sail leaped from his hands " —

So that he saw it high above him, grey,
And there his mate was falling ; quick he clutched
An arm in oilskins swiftly snatched away.
A voice said " Christ ! " a quick shape stooped and touched,
Chain struck his hands, ropes shot, the sky was smutched
With vast black fires that ran, that fell, that furled,
And then he saw the mast, the small snow hurled,

The fore-topgallant yard far, far aloft,
And blankness settling on him and great pain;
And snow beneath his fingers wet and soft,
And topsail sheet-blocks shaking at the chain.
He knew it was he who had fallen; then his brain
Swirled in a circle while he watched the sky.
Infinite multitudes of snow blew by.

"I thought it was Tom who fell," his brain's voice said.
"Down on the bloody deck!" the Captain screamed.
The multitudinous little snow-flakes sped.
His pain was real enough, but all else seemed.
Si with a bucket ran, the water gleamed
Tilting upon him; others came, the Mate . . .
They knelt with eager eyes like things that wait

For other things to come. He saw them there.
"It will go on," he murmured, watching Si.
Colors and sounds seemed mixing in the air,
The pain was stunning him, and the wind went by.
"More water," said the Mate. "Here, Bosun, try.
Ask if he's got a message. Hell, he's gone!
Here, Dauber, paints." He said, "It will go on."

Not knowing his meaning rightly, but he spoke
With the intenseness of a fading soul
Whose share of Nature's fire turns to smoke,
Whose hand on Nature's wheel loses control.
The eager faces glowered red like coal.
They glowed, the great storm glowed, the sails, the mast.
"It will go on," he cried aloud, and passed. . . .

"Well," said the Mate, "we cannot leave him here.
Run, Si, and get the half-deck table clear.
We'll lay him there. Catch hold there, you, and you,
He's dead, poor son; there's nothing more to do."

Night fell, and all night long the Dauber lay
Covered upon the table; all night long
The pitiless storm exulted at her prey,
Huddling the waters with her icy thong.
But to the covered shape she did no wrong.
He lay beneath the sailcloth. Bell by bell
The night wore through; the stars rose, the stars fell. . . .

He was off duty. So it blew all night,
And when the watches changed the men would come
Dripping within the door to strike a light
And stare upon the Dauber lying dumb,
And say, "He come a cruel thump, poor chum."
Or, "He'd a-been a fine big man;" or "He . . .
A smart young seaman he was getting to be."

CARGOES

Quinquireme of Nineveh from distant Ophir,
Rowing home to haven in sunny Palestine,
With a cargo of ivory,
And apes and peacocks,
Sandalwood, cedarwood, and sweet white wine.

Stately Spanish galleon coming from the Isthmus,
Dipping through the Tropics by the palm-green shores,
With a cargo of diamonds,
Emeralds, amethysts,
Topazes, and cinnamon, and gold moidores.

Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smokestack,
Batting through the Channel in the mad March days,
With a cargo of Tyne coal,
Road-rails, pig-lead,
Firewood, iron-ware, and cheap tin trays.

ALFRED NOYES (1880–)

Alfred Noyes was born in Staffordshire, September 16, 1880. At Oxford he read, wrote verse, and rowed in the college crew. His wife is an American, and since 1914 he has been Professor of Modern English Literature at Princeton University. He is a voluminous writer in both prose and verse. A collected edition of his poems, complete up to 1913, has been published in two volumes (Frederick A. Stokes Co., N. Y., 1913, etc.). Since then have been published by the same firm *The Lord of Misrule and Other Poems* (1915) and *The New Morning* (1919).

Mr. Noyes belongs to that company of modern poets which is more interested in singing the eternal passions and verities of life than in preaching rebellion or lamenting the decay of virtue. But his songs are not exquisite brevities in a sequestered garden, like Mr. De la Mare's, or occasional utterances of a charming spirit, like Stevenson's, or trumpets of the higher imperialism, like Mr. Kipling's, or discriminating and epigrammatic appreciations, like Sir William Watson's. His, rather, is a whole-hearted, optimistic, song of the patent life of the present and of the heroic and romantic adventures of the past. He hears an organ-grinder in the streets of London: his heart beats faster for the hearing, as have millions of hearts, — and we have a masterpiece, *The Barrel-Organ*. "Out of the mechanical grinding of the hand organ, with the accompaniment of city omnibuses, we get the very breath of spring in almost intolerable sweetness. This poem affects the head, the heart, and the feet. I defy any man or woman to read it without surrendering to the magic of the lilacs, the magic of old memories, the magic of the poet." Or he reads the tale on a grave-stone and gives us the pathetic romance of *The Fisher-Girl*. He sees pictures or butterflies, or a tramp, or junks of Old Hong Kong, or a wooden-legged fiddler, or a railway platform, or a swimming race, or an electric tram, or mist in the valley; or — best of all — he is a child and reads fairy tales of Old Japan and dreams a wonder-worker who brings all to life and spirits him away with other listening children to the world where fairyland is true: presto! a poem about each subject in turn. Or, he reads of Drake or Nelson adventuring on the high seas, or of Robin Hood and Maid Marian, or of Shakespeare, Ben Jonson and their fellow poets drinking at the Mermaid: more poems, and long ones, romantic, vigorous, above all interesting — the lyrical and epical narrative of *Drake*, the drama of *Sherwood*, *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern* — or shorter ones in ballad form, like *Forty Singing Seamen* and those printed below.

But the charm of his ballads must not blind one to the dignity and merit of his poems of loftier theme, — *Creation*, *The Old Sceptic*, *The Paradox*, and many more. He is both varied and wholesome. He is not a mere realist, portraying the everyday unconventional to shock us into thought; nor is he a classicist, mindful of traditional decorums. He is a forthright idealist, dealing helpfully with whatever subject seems to him worth while, getting at the heart of it and transfiguring for us its sometimes unromantic or dull historical appearance. Of all subjects none seems to him better worth while than the future of the Anglo-Saxon race. He is a devoted son of Great Britain, an ardent lover of America. Nearest his heart he cherishes the belief that on their friendship hangs the happiness of the world. Hence many of his noblest poems: of England — *Nelson's Year*, *In Time of War*, *A Song of England;* of England and America — that affectionate toast to America, the *Prologue* to *Drake*, *The Prayer for Peace*, *Princeton* (*1917*), and in his latest volume (1919), *Republic and Motherland* and the *Union*. The open-road swing of his metres, his unspoiled enthusiasm, his sincerity of conviction, his readiness to admire the heroism of high-hearted action and of patient suffering alike, the tang of the sea and the winds and the woods, — these make of his poems salutary and heartening influences. The subtler measures, rarer perfumes, stranger images he has also at his command, as in the most magical of his poems, *The Flower of Old Japan*.

THE BARREL-ORGAN[1]

There's a barrel-organ carolling across a golden street
In the City as the sun sinks low;
And the music's not immortal; but the world has made it sweet
And fulfilled it with the sunset glow;
And it pulses through the pleasures of the City and the pain
That surround the singing organ like a large eternal light;
And they've given it a glory and a part to play again
In the Symphony that rules the day and night.

And now it's marching onward through the realms of old romance,
And trolling out a fond familiar tune,

[1] The following poems by Alfred Noyes are included by permission of the author and of the publisher, Frederick A. Stokes Co.

And now it's roaring cannon down to fight the King of France,
  And now it's prattling softly to the moon,
And all around the organ there's a sea without a shore
  Of human joys and wonders and regrets,
To remember and to recompense the music evermore
  For what the cold machinery forgets. . . .

Yes; as the music changes,
  Like a prismatic glass,
It takes the light and ranges
  Through all the moods that pass;
Dissects the common carnival
  Of passions and regrets,
And gives the world a glimpse of all
  The colors it forgets.

And there *La Traviata* sighs
  Another sadder song;
And there *Il Trovatore* cries
  A tale of deeper wrong;
And bolder knights to battle go
  With sword and shield and lance,
Than ever here on earth below
  Have whirled into — *a dance!* —

Go down to Kew in lilac-time, in lilac-time, in lilac-time;
  Go down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)
And you shall wander hand in hand with love in summer's wonderland;
  Go down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)

The cherry-trees are seas of bloom and soft perfume and sweet perfume,
  The cherry-trees are seas of bloom (and oh, so near to London!)
And there they say, when dawn is high and all the world's a blaze of sky
  The cuckoo, though he's very shy, will sing a song for London.

The Dorian nightingale is rare and yet they say you'll hear
him there
At Kew, at Kew in lilac-time (and oh, so near to London !)
The linnet and the throstle, too, and after dark the long halloo
And golden-eyed *tu-whit*, *tu-whoo* of owls that ogle London.

For Noah hardly knew a bird of any kind that isn't heard
At Kew, at Kew in lilac-time (and oh, so near to London !)
And when the rose begins to pout and all the chestnut spires
are out
You'll hear the rest without a doubt, all chorusing for
London : —

Come down to Kew in lilac-time, in lilac-time, in lilac-time ;
Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London !)
And you shall wander hand in hand with love in summer's wonderland ;
Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London !)

And then the troubadour begins to thrill the golden street,
In the City as the sun sinks low ;
And in all the gaudy busses there are scores of weary feet
Marking time, sweet time, with a dull mechanic beat,
And a thousand hearts are plunging to a love they'll never meet,
Through the meadows of the sunset, through the poppies and
the wheat,
In the land where the dead dreams go.

Verdi, Verdi, when you wrote *Il Trovatore* did you dream
Of the City when the sun sinks low,
Of the organ and the monkey and the many-colored stream
On the Piccadilly pavement, of the myriad eyes that seem
To be litten for a moment with a wild Italian gleam
As *A che la morte* parodies the world's eternal theme
And pulses with the sunset-glow.

There's a thief, perhaps, that listens with a face of frozen stone
In the City as the sun sinks low ;

There's a portly man of business with a balance of his own,
There's a clerk and there's a butcher of a soft reposeful tone.
And they're all of them returning to the heavens they have known:
They are crammed and jammed in busses and — they're each of them alone
In the land where the dead dreams go.

There's a very modish woman and her smile is very bland
In the City as the sun sinks low;
And her hansom jingles onward, but her little jewelled hand
Is clenched a little tighter and she cannot understand
What she wants or why she wanders to that undiscovered land,
For the parties there are not at all the sort of thing she planned,
In the land where the dead dreams go.

There's a rowing man that listens and his heart is crying out
In the City as the sun sinks low;
For the barge, the eight, the Isis, and the coach's whoop and shout,
For the minute-gun, the counting, and the long dishevelled rout,
For the howl along the tow-path and a fate that's still in doubt,
For a roughened oar to handle and a race to think about
In the land where the dead dreams go.

There's a laborer that listens to the voices of the dead
In the City as the sun sinks low;
And his hand begins to tremble and his face to smolder red
As he sees a loafer watching him and — there he turns his head
And stares into the sunset where his April love is fled,
For he hears her softly singing and his lonely soul is led
Through the land where the dead dreams go.

There's an old and haggard demi-rep, it's ringing in her ears,
In the City as the sun sinks low;
With the wild and empty sorrow of the love that blights and sears,

Oh, and if she hurries onward, then be sure, be sure she hears,
Hears and bears the bitter burden of the unforgotten years,
And her laugh's a little harsher and her eyes are brimmed with tears
For the land where the dead dreams go.

There's a barrel-organ carolling across a golden street
In the City as the sun sinks low;
Though the music's only Verdi there's a world to make it sweet,
Just as yonder yellow sunset where the earth and heaven meet
Mellows all the sooty City! Hark, a hundred thousand feet
Are marching on to glory through the poppies and the wheat
In the land where the dead dreams go.

So it's Jeremiah, Jeremiah,
What have you to say
When you meet the garland girls
Tripping on their way?

All around my gala hat
I wear a wreath of roses
(A long and lonely year it is
I've waited for the May!)
If any one should ask you,
The reason why I wear it is —
My own love, my true love
Is coming home to-day.

And it's buy a bunch of violets for the lady
(*It's lilac-time in London; it's lilac-time in London!*)
Buy a bunch of violets for the lady
While the sky burns blue above:

On the other side the street you'll find it shady
(*It's lilac-time in London; it's lilac-time in London!*)
But buy a bunch of violets for the lady,
And tell her she's your own true love.

There's a barrel-organ carolling across a golden street
In the City as the sun sinks glittering and slow;
And the music's not immortal; but the world has made it sweet
And enriched it with the harmonies that make a song complete
In the deeper heavens of music where the night and morning meet,
As it dies into the sunset-glow;
And it pulses through the pleasures of the City and the pain
That surround the singing organ like a large eternal light,
And they've given it a glory and a part to play again
In the Symphony that rules the day and night.

And there, as the music changes,
The song runs round again.
Once more it turns and ranges
Through all its joy and pain,
Dissects the common carnival
Of passions and regrets;
And the wheeling world remembers all
The wheeling song forgets.

Once more *La Traviata* sighs
Another sadder song:
Once more *Il Trovatore* cries
A tale of deeper wrong;
Once more the knights to battle go
With sword and shield and lance
Till once, once more, the shattered foe
Has whirled into — *a dance!*

Come down to Kew in lilac-time, in lilac-time, in lilac-time;
Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)
And you shall wander hand in hand with love in summer's wonderland;
Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)

THE ADMIRAL'S GHOST

I tell you a tale to-night
Which a seaman told to me,
With eyes that gleamed in the lanthorn light
And a voice as low as the sea.

You could almost hear the stars
Twinkling up in the sky,
And the old wind woke and moaned in the spars,
And the same old waves went by,

Singing the same old song
As ages and ages ago,
While he froze my blood in that deep-sea night
With the things that he seemed to know.

A bare foot pattered on deck;
Ropes creaked; then — all grew still,
And he pointed his finger straight in my face
And growled, as a sea-dog will.

"Do'ee know who Nelson was?
That pore little shrivelled form
With a patch on his eye and the pinned-up sleeve
And a soul like a North Sea storm?

"Ask of the Devonshire men!
They know, and they'll tell you true;
He wasn't the pore little chawed-up chap
That Hardy thought he knew.

"He wasn't the man you think!
His patch was a dern disguise!
For he knew that they'd find him out, d'you see,
If they looked him in both his eyes.

"He was twice as big as he seemed;
But his clothes were cunningly made.

He'd both of his hairy arms all right!
The sleeve was a trick of the trade.

"You've heard of sperrits, no doubt;
Well, there's more in the matter than that!
But he wasn't the patch and he wasn't the sleeve,
And he wasn't the laced cocked-hat.

"*Nelson was just — a Ghost!*
You may laugh! But the Devonshire men
They knew that he'd come when England called,
And they know that he'll come again.

"I'll tell you the way it was
(For none of the landsmen know),
And to tell it you right, you must go a-starn
Two hundred years or so.

. . . . . .

"The waves were lapping and slapping
The same as they are to-day;
And Drake lay dying aboard his ship
In Nombre Dios Bay.

"The scent of the foreign flowers
Came floating all around;
'But I'd give my soul for the smell o' the pitch,'
Says he, 'in Plymouth Sound.

"'What shall I do,' he says,
'When the guns begin to roar,
And England wants me, and me not there
To shatter 'er foes once more?'

"(You've heard what he said, maybe,
But I'll mark you the p'ints again;
For I want you to box your compass right
And get my story plain.)

" ' You must take my drum,' he says,
' To the old sea-wall at home;
And if ever you strike that drum,' he says,
' Why, strike me blind, I'll come!

" ' If England needs me, dead
Or living, I'll rise that day!
I'll rise from the darkness under the sea
Ten thousand miles away.'

" That's what he said; and he died;
An' his pirates, listenin' roun',
With their crimson doublets and jewelled swords
That flashed as the sun went down,

" They sewed him up in his shroud
With a round-shot top and toe,
To sink him under the salt sharp sea
Where all good seamen go.

" They lowered him down in the deep,
And there in the sunset light
They boomed a broadside over his grave,
As meanin' to say ' Good-night.'

" They sailed away in the dark
To the dear little isle they knew;
And they hung his drum by the old sea-wall
The same as he told them to.

. . . . . .

" Two hundred years went by,
And the guns began to roar,
And England was fighting hard for her life,
As ever she fought of yore.

" ' It's only my dead that count,'
She said, as she says to-day;

'It isn't the ships and it isn't the guns
'Ull sweep Trafalgar's Bay.'

"D'you guess who Nelson was?
You may laugh, but it's true as true!
There was more in that pore little chawed-up chap
Than ever his best friend knew.

"The foe was creepin' close,
In the dark, to our white cliffed isle;
They were ready to leap at England's throat,
When — O, you may smile, you may smile;

"But — ask of the Devonshire men;
For they heard in the dead of night
The roll of a drum, and they saw *him* pass
On a ship all shining white.

"He stretched out his dead cold face
And he sailed in the grand old way!
The fishes had taken an eye and his arm,
But he swept Trafalgar's Bay.

"Nelson — was Francis Drake!
O, what matters the uniform,
Or the patch on your eye or your pinned-up sleeve,
If your soul's like a North Sea storm?"

THE HIGHWAYMAN

PART ONE

The wind was a torrent of darkness among the gusty trees,
The moon was a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,
The road was a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,
And the highwayman came riding —
Riding — riding —
The highwayman came riding, up to the old inn-door.

He'd a French cocked-hat on his forehead, a bunch of lace at his chin,
A coat of the claret velvet, and breeches of brown doeskin;
They fitted with never a wrinkle: his boots were up to the thigh!
And he rode with a jewelled twinkle,
His pistol butts a-twinkle,
His rapier hilt a-twinkle, under the jewelled sky.

Over the cobbles he clattered and clashed in the dark inn-yard,
And he tapped with his whip on the shutters, but all was locked and barred;
He whistled a tune to the window, and who should be waiting there
But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Bess, the landlord's daughter,
Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair.

And dark in the dark old inn-yard a stable wicket creaked
Where Tim the ostler listened; his face was white and peaked;
His eyes were hollows of madness, his hair like mouldy hay,
But he loved the landlord's daughter,
The landlord's red-lipped daughter,
Dumb as a dog he listened, and he heard the robber say —

"One kiss, my bonny sweetheart, I'm after a prize to-night,
But I shall be back with the yellow gold before the morning light;
Yet, if they press me sharply, and harry me through the day,
Then look for me by moonlight,
Watch for me by moonlight,
I'll come to thee by moonlight, though hell should bar the way."

He rose upright in the stirrups; he scarce could reach her hand,
But she loosened her hair i' the casement! His face burnt like a brand
As the black cascade of perfume came tumbling over his breast;

And he kissed its waves in the moonlight,
(Oh, sweet black waves in the moonlight!)
Then he tugged at his rein in the moonlight, and galloped away to the West.

PART TWO

He did not come in the dawning; he did not come at noon;
And out o' the tawny sunset, before the rise o' the moon,
When the road was a gipsy's ribbon, looping the purple moor,
A red-coat troop came marching —
Marching — marching —
King George's men came marching, up to the old inn-door.

They said no word to the landlord, they drank his ale instead,
But they gagged his daughter and bound her to the foot of her narrow bed;
Two of them knelt at her casement, with muskets at their side!
There was death at every window;
And hell at one dark window;
For Bess could see, through her casement, the road that *he* would ride.

They had tied her up to attention, with many a sniggering jest;
They had bound a musket beside her, with the barrel beneath her breast!
"Now keep good watch!" and they kissed her.
She heard the dead man say —
Look for me by moonlight;
Watch for me by moonlight;
I'll come to thee by moonlight, though hell should bar the way!

She twisted her hands behind her; but all the knots held good!
She writhed her hands till her fingers were wet with sweat or blood!
They stretched and strained in the darkness, and the hours crawled by like years,

Till, now, on the stroke of midnight,
Cold, on the stroke of midnight,
The tip of one finger touched it! The trigger at least was hers!

The tip of one finger touched it; she strove no more for the rest!
Up, she stood up to attention, with the barrel beneath her breast,
She would not risk their hearing; she would not strive again;
For the road lay bare in the moonlight;
Blank and bare in the moonlight;
And the blood of her veins in the moonlight throbbed to her love's refrain.

Tlot-tlot; tlot-tlot! Had they heard it? The horse-hoofs ringing clear;
Tlot-tlot, tlot-tlot, in the distance? Were they deaf that they did not hear?
Down the ribbon of moonlight, over the brow of the hill,
The highwayman came riding,
Riding, riding!
The red-coats looked to their priming! She stood up, straight and still!

Tlot-tlot, in the frosty silence! *Tlot-tlot,* in the echoing night!
Nearer he came and nearer! Her face was like a light!
Her eyes grew wide for a moment; she drew one last deep breath,
Then her finger moved in the moonlight,
Her musket shattered the moonlight,
Shattered her breast in the moonlight and warned him — with her death.

He turned; he spurred to the West; he did not know who stood
Bowed, with her head o'er the musket, drenched with her own red blood!

Not till the dawn he heard it, his face grew grey to hear
How Bess, the landlord's daughter,
The landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Had watched for her love in the moonlight, and died in the darkness there.

Back, he spurred like a madman, shrieking a curse to the sky,
With the white road smoking behind him and his rapier brandished high!
Blood-red were his spurs i' the golden noon; wine-red his velvet coat,
When they shot him down on the highway,
Down like a dog on the highway,
And he lay in his blood on the highway, with the bunch of lace at his throat.

. . . . . .

And still of a winter's night, they say, when the wind is in the trees,
When the moon is a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,
When the road is a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,
A highwayman comes riding —
Riding — riding —
A highwayman comes riding, up to the old inn-door.

Over the cobbles he clatters and clangs in the dark inn-yard;
He taps with his whip on the shutters, but all is locked and barred;
He whistles a tune to the window, and who should be waiting there
But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Bess, the landlord's daughter,
Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair.

JAMES STEPHENS (1882–)

James Stephens, Irish novelist and poet, has published works of fiction, *The Crock of Gold* (1912) and *The Demi-Gods* (1914), and several volumes of verse, including *Insurrections* (1909), *The Hill of Vision* (1912), *Songs from the Clay* (1914), *The Adventures of Seumas Beg*, printed with *The Rocky Road to Dublin* (1915), *Green Branches* (1916), and *Reincarnations* (1918).

By his occasional use of irregular rhythms, by his novelty of subject, his unstereotyped diction, and his sensational simplicity — or at least directness — Mr. Stephens stands in some sort of alliance with the 'New Poetry' of the Georgian era. By the source, setting, and association of much of his work, and by his own affiliations, he is an important part of the new Irish movement. His poetry presents two main aspects, the purposive and the amusing. By his verses of serious intent — by the beauty of their rhythms, the dignity of their diction, their splendid faith in self-conquest and in the progressive humanizing of the race — he lays claim to a high place among poets. He stimulates a deep delight as he calls us to gird up our loins for the worth-while struggle to civilize ourselves by realizing our dreams. This serious aspect of his art appears in the later portions of *The Lonely God*, from which our first selection is taken, in *The Waste Places*, in *A Prelude and a Song*, and other poems. Here there is fire, teaching, prophecy, and the call of bugles, — all very noble and strong, almost shaming the spirit of mere revolt and lamentation.

Of the amusing aspect of his poetry we have the best possible examples in our other selections. Seumas (pronounced Shā-mus) Beg, little James, tells his adventures. With a child's stark directness and familiar treatment of Devil, Angel, and God, the author combines a whimsical originality that leaves the reader breathless for more. The laconic perfection of phrase and the veracity with which the boy's states of mind are revealed make these verses a treasure forever. Mr. Stephens is able, moreover, to extend most of these qualities to subjects in which children are not concerned. When, as in Thomas an Buile's naïve story of his vision of God, told in a 'Pub,' this laconic simplicity suddenly bursts into a thought of heavenly splendor, the effect is truly interpretative. In some of the short poems there is a primitive, almost pagan, mood of oneness with nature; in others, the reckless humor of sheer absurdity, or the pathos of hope human and unfulfilled, or a smiling irony.

THE LONELY GOD

(*A Selection*)

So Eden was deserted, and at eve
Into the quiet place God came to grieve.
His face was sad, His hands hung slackly down
Along His robe; too sorrowful to frown
He paced along the grassy paths and through
The silent trees, and where the flowers grew
Tended by Adam. All the birds had gone
Out to the world, and singing was not one
To cheer the lonely God out of His grief —
The silence broken only when a leaf
Tap't lightly on a leaf, or when the wind,
Slow-handed, swayed the bushes to its mind.

And so along the base of a round hill,
Rolling in fern, He bent His way until
He neared the little hut which Adam made,
And saw its dusky rooftree overlaid
With greenest leaves. Here Adam and his spouse
Were wont to nestle in their little house
Snug at the dew-time: here He, standing sad,
Sighed with the wind, nor any pleasure had
In heavenly knowledge, for His darlings twain
Had gone from Him to learn the feel of pain,
And what was meant by sorrow and despair, —
Drear knowledge for a Father to prepare.

There He looked sadly on the little place;
A beehive round it was, without a trace
Of occupant or owner; standing dim
Among the gloomy trees it seemed to Him
A final desolation, the last word
Wherewith the lips of silence had been stirred.
Chaste and remote, so tiny and so shy,

[1] From *The Hill of Vision* by permission of The Macmillan Co.

So new withal, so lost to any eye,
So pac't of memories all innocent
Of days and nights that in it had been spent
In blithe communion, Adam, Eve, and He,
Afar from Heaven and its gaudery;
And now no more! He still must be the God
But not the friend; a Father with a rod
Whose voice was fear, whose countenance a threat,
Whose coming terror, and whose going wet
With penitential tears; not evermore
Would they run forth to meet Him as before
With careless laughter, striving each to be
First to His hand and dancing in their glee
To see Him coming — they would hide instead
At His approach, or stand and hang the head,
Speaking in whispers, and would learn to pray
Instead of asking, " Father, if we may."

Never again to Eden would He haste
At cool of evening, when the sun had paced
Back from the tree-tops, slanting from the rim
Of a low cloud, what time the twilight dim
Knit tree to tree in shadow, gathering slow
Till all had met and vanished in the flow
Of dusky silence, and a brooding star
Stared at the growing darkness from afar,
While haply now and then some nested bird
Would lift upon the air a sleepy word
Most musical, or swing its airy bed
To the high moon that drifted overhead.

'Twas good to quit at evening His great throne,
To lay His crown aside, and all alone
Down through the quiet air to stoop and glide
Unkenned by angels: silently to hide
In the green fields, by dappled shades, where brooks
Through leafy solitudes and quiet nooks
Flowed far from heavenly majesty and pride,

From light astounding and the wheeling tide
Of roaring stars. Thus does it ever seem
Good to the best to stay aside and dream
In narrow places, where the hand can feel
Something beside, and know that it is real.
His angels! silly creatures who could sing
And sing again, and delicately fling
The smoky censer, bow and stand aside
All mute in adoration: thronging wide,
Till nowhere could He look but soon He saw
An angel bending humbly to the law
Mechanic; knowing nothing more of pain,
Than when they were forbid to sing again,
Or swing anew the censer, or bow down
In humble adoration of His frown.
This was the thought in Eden as He trod —
. . . It is a lonely thing to be a God.

POEMS FROM THE ADVENTURES OF SEUMAS BEG[1]

THE HORSE

A sparrow hopped about the street,
And he was not a bit afraid;
He flew between a horse's feet,
And ate his supper undismayed:
I think myself the horse knew well
The bird came for the grains that fell.

For his eye was looking down,
And he danced the corn about
In his nose-bag, till the brown
Grains of corn were tumbled out;
And I fancy that he said,
"Eat it up, young Speckle-Head!"

The driver then came back again,
He climbed into the heavy dray;

[1] From *The Rocky Road to Dublin*, by permission of The Macmillan Co.

And he tightened up the rein,
Cracked his whip and drove away.
But when the horse's ribs were hit,
The sparrow did not care a bit.

THE DEVIL'S BAG

I saw the Devil walking down the lane
Behind our house. — There was a heavy bag
Strapped tightly on his shoulders, and the rain
Sizzled when it hit him. He picked a rag
Up from the ground and put it in his sack,
And grinned and rubbed his hands. There was a thing
Moving inside the bag upon his back —
It must have been a soul! I saw it fling
And twist about inside, and not a hole
Or cranny for escape! Oh, it was sad!
I cried, and shouted out, "*Let out that soul!*"
But he turned round, and, sure, his face went mad,
And twisted up and down, and he said "*Hell!*"
And ran away . . . Oh, mammy! I'm not well.

A VISIT FROM ABROAD

A speck went blowing up against the sky
As little as a leaf: then it drew near
And broadened. — "It's a bird," said I,
And fetched my bow and arrows. It was queer!
It grew up from a speck into a blot,
And squattered past a cloud; then it flew down
All crumply, and waggled such a lot
I thought the thing would fall. — It was a brown
Old carpet where a man was sitting snug
Who, when he reached the ground, began to sew
A big hole in the middle of the rug,
And kept on peeping everywhere to know
Who might be coming — then he gave a twist
And flew away . . . I fired at him but missed.

WHAT THE SNAKE SAW

A little girl and a big, ugly man
Went down the road. The girl was crying
And asking to go home, but when she ran
He hit her on the head and sent her flying,
And called her a young imp, and said he'd break
Her neck unless she went with him, and then
He smacked her on the cheek. — I was a snake
At that time crawling through a robber's den,
And diamonds were sticking to my tongue —
(That's the best dodge), but when I saw the way
He beat the little girl I up and flung
A stone at him. My aim was bad that day
Because I hit the girl . . . and she did sing!
But he jumped round and cursed like anything.

MIDNIGHT

And then I wakened up in such a fright;
I thought I heard a movement in the room
But did not dare to look; I snuggled right
Down underneath the bedclothes — then the boom
Of a tremendous voice said, "*Sit up, lad,*
And let me see your face." So up I sat,
Although I didn't want to. I was glad
I did though, for it was an angel that
Had called me, and he said, he'd come to know
Was I the boy who wouldn't say his prayers
Nor do his sums, and that I'd have to go
Straight down to hell because of such affairs.
. . . I said I'd be converted and do good
If he would let me off — he said he would.

SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN (1880–)

James Starkey (*pseudonym*, "Seumas" — pronounced Shā-mus — "O'Sullivan") was born in 1880. He has published *New Songs* (in

collaboration, 1904), *The Twilight People* (1905), *Verses, Sacred and Profane* (1908), *The Earth Lover* (1909), *Selected Lyrics* (1910), *Poems* (collected edition, 1912), *An Epilogue and Other Poems* (1914), etc.

Seumas O'Sullivan makes music of varied strains: the strain of his *Fiddler*, printed below, caught from the throat of a bird, — wild, entrancing, eerie and weird, lilting beneath an iridescent Celtic moon; the tune of a *Piper* in a city street, that suddenly interprets the human hearts that are there and sets them fluttering; the song of the lark in *Mercer Street*, momentarily forgetful of its imprisonment, bubbling, note on note, till it springs against its prison walls and there is silence, — or of the larks and daffodils, both gleeful, in *Patrick's Close*, where the thin-faced children are exiled wanderers out of the Age of Gold. Again, his music will come crashing down in peals of sardonic laughter to the realism of funerals passing out Glasnevin way. In a whispering, reminiscent, magical style, he writes *The Sheep*, *The Twilight People*, *To the End of Days*, and *The Poplars*, — poems of Celtic atmosphere that remind one of Yeats's work. Of Seumas O'Sullivan in this mood one critic has said: "He is the literary successor of those old Gaelic Poets who were fastidious in their verse, who loved little in this world but some chance light in it which reminded them of fairyland." In a weary mood of monotonous days and stagnant air he writes another poem of Mercer Street and poems on Nelson Street and North Great George's Street. He writes also verses of child's fantasies — *Dead Letters* and *Omens* — which bring James Stephens to mind. O'Sullivan's moods are as varied as his subjects, but all his poetry has quality and distinction. The poems mentioned may be found in the collected edition of 1912 (Maunsel and Co., Dublin).

THE BALLAD OF THE FIDDLER

He had played by the cottage fire
  Till the dancing all was done,
But his heart kept up the music
  When the last folk had gone.

So he came through the half-door softly
  And wandered up the hill,
In the glow of his heart's desire
  That was on the music still.

And he passed the blackthorn thicket,
And he heard the branches groan,
As they bowed beneath the burden
Of the white fruit of the moon.

And he came to the fairy circle
Where none but the wise may sit:
And blindness was on him surely
For he sat in the midst of it.

And maybe his heart went dreaming,
Or maybe his thoughts went wide,
But he took his battered old fiddle
And he took the bow from his side.

And he said, "I will play them such music
As never a fairy heard."
He said, "I will play them the music
I stole from the throat of a bird."

And the sound of his lilt went straying
By valley and stream and sedge
Till the little white stars went dancing
Along the mountain's edge.

And things came out of the bushes
And out of the grassy mound
And joined their hands in a circle
And danced to the fiddle's sound.

And quicker and sweeter and stranger
The notes came hurrying out
And joined with a shriek and a whistle
In the dance of the Goblin Rout.

And all night long on the green lands
They danced in a 'wildered ring,
And every note of the fiddle
Was the shriek of a godless thing.

And when the winter morning
Came whitely up the glen,
The Fiddler's soul fled whistling
In the rout of the Fairy Men.

IN MERCER STREET

I. A PIPER

A piper in the streets to-day
Set up, and tuned, and started to play,
And away, away, away on the tide
Of his music we started; on every side
Doors and windows were opened wide,
And men left down their work and came,
And women with petticoats colored like flame
And little bare feet that were blue with cold,
Went dancing back to the age of gold,
And all the world went gay, went gay,
For half an hour in the street to-day.

II. LARK'S SONG

On Mercer Street the light slants down,
And straightway an enchanted town
Is round him: pinnacle and spire
Flash back, elate, the sudden fire;
And clear above the silent street
Falls suddenly and strangely sweet
The lark's song. Bubbling, note on note
Rise fountain-like, o'erflow and float
Tide upon tide, and make more fair
The magic of the sunlit air.
No more the cage can do him wrong,
All is forgotten save his song:
He has forgot the ways of men,
Wide heaven is over him again,

And round him the wide fields of dew
That his first infant mornings knew,
E'er yet the dolorous years had brought
The hours of captive anguish, fraught
With the vile clamor of the street,
The insult of the passing feet,
The torture of the daily round,
The organ's blasphemy of sound.
Sudden some old swift memory brings
The knowledge of forgotten wings,
He springs elate and panting falls
At the rude touch of prison walls.
Silence. Again the street is grey:
Shut down the windows — Work-a-day.

PATRICK'S CLOSE

In Patrick's Close this morning
The larks sang out so well,
So brave and sweet and clearly,
That you could hardly tell
They did not sing in freedom
Above some heathery dell.

And daffodils in baskets
Held out so brave and gay
Their cups of golden laughter,
You'd never know that they
Had drunk their fill of sunlight
Where skies are never grey.

Only the thin-faced children
They looked so grave and old,
You'd know at once for certain
Though you were never told,
They were but exiled wanderers
Out of the Age of Gold.

THE FUNERALS

As I go down Glasnevin way
The funerals pass me day by day;
Stately, sombre, stepping slow
The white-plumed funeral horses go,
With coaches crawling in their wake:
A long and slow black glittering snake
(Inside of every crawling yoke
Silent cronies sit and smoke).
Ever more as I grow thinner
Day by day without a dinner,
Every day as I go down
I meet the funerals leaving town;
Soon my procession will be on view,
A hearse and, maybe, a coach or two.

2. POETRY OF THE GREAT WAR

None of the nobler English and American poems of the Great War is the expression of blind hatred. Such poems when they refer to the foe are rather the utterance of indignation and stern resolve, as, for instance, Mr. Kipling's *For All We Have and Are* (already included among our selections from the Younger Victorian Poets), or with the same resolve they are the utterance of surprise, reproach, sorrow, that a power counted among the foremost in the advance of civilization should have bartered its honor for lust of dominion and forced the sword into the hands of nations committed to peace. Of the latter sort is the address to Germany by JOHN DRINKWATER (b. 1882), *We Willed it not.* In still other verses, such as *Edith Cavell*, by LAURENCE BINYON (b. 1869), the enemy stands self-condemned before the forgiveness and the pity of the victim of his brutality. In the deepest sense the poetry of the war is patriotic, but the patriotism is not merely of country and its cause. If of country, as in JOHN MASEFIELD'S sublime elegy, *August, 1914* (which we regret we cannot reproduce), it is not partisanship, but a dedication to duty, supported by the spiritual presence of heroes who in other wars, in ages past, gave their lives for an idea. It is a dedication of self that civilization may be saved, a devotion to humanity, a determination to put an end to war once for all; it is, as in ALFRED NOYES'S *Princeton* (*1917*),

a faith in the coming kingdom of the Lord. The spirit of this patriotism does not express itself in the old-fashioned glorification of national or individual values. It glories as much as ever in the nobility of the valiant nation, the undaunted soul, but its poetry rarely indulges in heroics. Modern warfare sinks the individual in the collective aim and the complicated machinery of the event. Sometimes, indeed, the poems are of person and incident historic or apparently trivial, or of the mood — sublime, tragic, pathetic, or grimly humorous — as in the volume by WILFRID WILSON GIBSON (b. 1878), *Battle and Other Poems;* but such portrayals are flash-lights of experience common to vast masses of mankind in upheaval. More often the poet — the soldier-poet — sings of home and of cheer for the loved ones there; sings of the cleansing worth of the effort and the suffering, the certainty of an Eternal Purpose, the beauty of death by which not only the soul is saved but the living are bettered. Or he sings of the procession of the seasons unperturbed by the carnival of slaughter, but breathing peace; sometimes of nature consciously sympathetic and giving courage. Of such in one kind or other are the poems of Captain the Hon. JULIAN GRENFELL, Lieutenant-Colonel JOHN MCCRAE, Sub-Lieutenant RUPERT BROOKE, and ALAN SEEGER of the Foreign Legion, whom, though an American, we have included in this group of generous hearts. The imperishable poetry of the war betrays no murmur of revolt, no accent of despair; it rejoices in the holiness, honor, nobleness that duty has recovered for mankind, in the victory that the ages shall attain.

The four soldier-poets here represented gave their lives. John McCrae (1872–1918), a distinguished Canadian physician, served in the Boer War, and from 1914 to 1918 in the Great War as Lieutenant-Colonel in the Medical Corps. *In Flanders Fields* was written during the second battle of Ypres, in the spring of 1915. The poet died of pneumonia, January 28, 1918, at the General Hospital in Boulogne. For his life see the volume *In Flanders Fields* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1919). — The Hon. Julian Grenfell was the oldest son of Lord Desborough. He was a Captain in the First Royal Dragoons and was noted for his "light-hearted and lion-hearted courage." He was wounded in the second battle of Ypres and died March 13, 1915. — Alan Seeger, born in New York, 1888, was educated at Harvard. He joined the Foreign Legion of France in 1914 and was a noble and joyous soldier. Wounded on July 4, 1916, he died the next day. His *Poems*, with an Introduction by William Archer, are published by Charles Scribner's Sons (1917). — Rupert

Brooke, a poet, beautiful and manly of body and soul, was born at Rugby, 1887. He was a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge. In the Antwerp Expedition of 1914 he was Sub-Lieutenant in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. In 1915 he was with the British Expeditionary Force in the Ægean, and in April of that year he died. He was buried in the island of Skyros. For his life see his *Collected Poems*, 1915, and *Rupert Brooke: a Memoir* by Edward Marsh, 1918 (both published by John Lane Company, New York).

WE WILLED IT NOT[1]

We willed it not. We have not lived in hate,
  Loving too well the shires of England thrown
From sea to sea to covet your estate,
  Or wish one flight of fortune from your throne.

We had grown proud because the nations stood
  Hoping together against the calumny
That, tortured of its old barbarian blood,
  Barbarian still the heart of man should be.

Builders there are who name you overlord,
  Building with us the citadels of light,
Who hold as we this chartered sin abhorred,
  And cry you risen Cæsar of the Night.

Beethoven speaks with Milton on this day,
  And Shakespeare's word with Goethe's beats the sky,
In witness of the birthright you betray,
  In witness of the vision you deny.

We love the hearth, the quiet hills, the song,
  The friendly gossip come from every land;
And very peace were now a nameless wrong —
  You thrust this bitter quarrel to our hand.

For this your pride the tragic armies go,
  And the grim navies watch along the seas;

[1] Used by special permission of and by arrangement with Houghton Mifflin Company.

You trade in death, you mock at life, you throw
To God the tumult of your blasphemies.

You rob us of our love-right. It is said.
In treason to the world you are enthroned.
We rise, and, by the yet ungathered dead,
Not lightly shall the treason be atoned.

John Drinkwater.

INTO BATTLE[1]

The naked earth is warm with Spring,
And with green grass and bursting trees
Leans to the sun's gaze glorying,
And quivers in the sunny breeze;

And life is Color and Warmth and Light,
And a striving evermore for these;
And he is dead who will not fight;
And who dies fighting has increase.

The fighting man shall from the sun
Take warmth, and life from the glowing earth;
Speed with the light-foot winds to run,
And with the trees to newer birth;
And find, when fighting shall be done,
Great rest, and fullness after dearth.

All the bright company of Heaven
Hold him in their high comradeship,
The Dog-Star, and the Sisters Seven,
Orion's Belt and sworded hip.

The woodland trees that stand together,
They stand to him each one a friend;

[1] Reprinted, by permission, from the London *Times* of May 28, 1915

They gently speak in the windy weather;
  They guide to valley and ridges' end.

The kestrel hovering by day,
  And the little owls that call by night,
Bid him be swift and keen as they,
  As keen of ear, as swift of sight.

The blackbird sings to him, " Brother, brother,
  If this be the last song you shall sing,
Sing well, for you may not sing another;
  Brother, sing."

In dreary, doubtful, waiting hours,
  Before the brazen frenzy starts,
The horses show him nobler powers;
  O patient eyes, courageous hearts!

And when the burning moment breaks,
  And all things else are out of mind,
And only Joy-of-Battle takes
  Him by the throat, and makes him blind,

Through joy and blindness he shall know,
  Not caring much to know, that still
Nor lead nor steel shall reach him, so
  That it be not the Destined Will.

The thundering line of battle stands,
  And in the air Death moans and sings;
But Day shall clasp him with strong hands,
  And Night shall fold him in soft wings.

Julian Grenfell.

RETREAT [1]

Broken, bewildered by the long retreat
Across the stifling leagues of southern plain,
Across the scorching leagues of trampled grain,
Half-stunned, half-blinded, by the trudge of feet
And dusty smother of the August heat,
He dreamt of flowers in an English lane,
Of hedgerow flowers glistening after rain —
All-heal and willow-herb and meadow-sweet.

All-heal and willow-herb and meadow-sweet —
The innocent names kept up a cool refrain —
All-heal and willow-herb and meadow-sweet,
Chiming and tinkling in his aching brain,
Until he babbled like a child again —
" All-heal and willow-herb and meadow-sweet."

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson.

THE MESSAGES

" I cannot quite remember . . . There were five
Dropt dead beside me in the trench — and three
Whispered their dying messages to me. . ."

Back from the trenches, more dead than alive,
Stone-deaf and dazed, and with a broken knee,
He hobbled slowly, muttering vacantly:

" I cannot quite remember . . . There were five
Dropt dead beside me in the trench, and three
Whispered their dying messages to me. . .

" Their friends are waiting, wondering how they thrive —
Waiting a word in silence patiently. . .
But what they said, or who their friends may be

[1] This and the two following poems are reprinted from *Battle and Other Poems*, by permission of The Macmillan Company.

" I cannot quite remember . . . There were five
Dropt dead beside me in the trench — and three
Whispered their dying messages to me. . ."

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson.

SALVAGE

So suddenly her life
Had crashed about that gray old country wife,
Naked she stood, and gazed
Bewildered, while her home about her blazed.
New-widowed, and bereft
Of her five sons, she clung to what was left,
Still hugging all she'd got —
A toy gun and a copper coffee-pot.

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson.

I HAVE A RENDEZVOUS WITH DEATH[1]

I have a rendezvous with Death
At some disputed barricade,
When Spring comes back with rustling shade
And apple-blossoms fill the air —
I have a rendezvous with Death
When Spring brings back blue days and fair.

It may be he shall take my hand
And lead me into his dark land
And close my eyes and quench my breath —
It may be I shall pass him still.
I have a rendezvous with Death
On some scarred slope of battered hill,
When Spring comes round again this year
And the first meadow-flowers appear.

[1] From *Poems by Alan Seeger*, copyright, 1916, by Charles Scribner's Sons. By permission of the publishers.

God knows 'twere better to be deep
Pillowed in silk and scented down,
Where Love throbs out in blissful sleep
Pulse nigh to pulse, and breath to breath,
Where hushed awakenings are dear . . .
But I've a rendezvous with Death
At midnight in some flaming town,
When Spring trips north again this year,
And I to my pledged word am true,
I shall not fail that rendezvous.

Alan Seeger.

THE SOLDIER [1]

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

Rupert Brooke.

THE DEAD, I

Blow out, you bugles, over the rich Dead!
There's none of these so lonely and poor of old,

[1] This and the two following poems are reprinted from *The Collected Poems of Rupert Brooke*, by permission of the John Lane Company, N. Y.

But, dying, has made us rarer gifts than gold.
These laid the world away; poured out the red
Sweet wine of youth; gave up the years to be
Of work and joy, and that unhoped serene,
That men call age; and those who would have been,
Their sons, they gave, their immortality.

Blow, bugles, blow! They brought us, for our dearth,
Holiness, lacked so long, and Love, and Pain.
Honor has come back, as a king, to earth,
And paid his subjects with a royal wage;
And Nobleness walks in our ways again;
And we have come into our heritage.

Rupert Brooke.

THE DEAD, II

These hearts were woven of human joys and cares,
Washed marvellously with sorrow, swift to mirth.
The years had given them kindness. Dawn was theirs,
And sunset, and the colors of the earth,
These had seen movement, and heard music; known
Slumber and waking; loved; gone proudly friended;
Felt the quick stir of wonder; sat alone;
Touched flowers and furs and cheeks. All this is ended.

There are waters blown by changing winds to laughter
And lit by the rich skies, all day. And after,
Frost, with a gesture, stays the waves that dance
And wandering loveliness. He leaves a white
Unbroken glory, a gathered radiance,
A width, a shining peace, under the night.

Rupert Brooke.

EDITH CAVELL[1]

She was binding the wounds of her enemies when they came —
The lint in her hand unrolled.
They battered the door with their rifle-butts, crashed it in:
She faced them gentle and bold.

They haled her before the judges where they sat
In their places, helmet on head.
With question and menace the judges assailed her, "Yes,
I have broken your law," she said.

"I have tended the hurt and hidden the hunted, have done
As a sister does to a brother,
Because of a law that is greater than that you have made,
Because I could do none other.

"Deal as you will with me. This is my choice to the end,
To live in the life I vowed."
"She is self-confessed," they cried; "she is self-condemned.
She shall die, that the rest may be cowed."

In the terrible hour of the dawn, when the veins are cold,
They led her forth to the wall.
"I have loved my land," she said, "but it is not enough:
Love requires of me all.

"I will empty my heart of the bitterness, hating none."
And sweetness filled her brave
With a vision of understanding beyond the hour
That knelled to the waiting grave.

They bound her eyes, but she stood as if she shone.
The rifles it was that shook
When the hoarse command rang out. They could not endure
That last, that defenceless look.

[1] Reprinted from *The Cause*, by permission of and arrangement with Houghton Mifflin Company.

And the officer strode and pistolled her surely, ashamed
That men, seasoned in blood,
Should quail at a woman, only a woman, —
As a flower stamped in the mud.

And now that the deed was securely done, in the night
When none had known her fate,
They answered those that had striven for her, day by day:
"It is over, you come too late."

And with many words and sorrowful-phrased excuse
Argued their German right
To kill, most legally; hard though the duty be,
The law must assert its might.

Only a woman! yet she had pity on them,
The victim offered slain
To the gods of fear that they worship. Leave them there,
Red hands, to clutch their gain!

She bewailed not herself, and we will bewail her not,
But with tears of pride rejoice
That an English soul was found so crystal-clear
To be triumphant voice

Of the human heart that dares adventure all
But live to itself untrue,
And beyond all laws sees love as the light in the night,
As the star it must answer to.

The hurts she healed, the thousands comforted — these
Make a fragrance of her fame.
But because she stept to her star right on through death,
It is Victory speaks her name.

Laurence Binyon.

IN FLANDERS FIELDS[1]

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

John McCrae.

PRINCETON[2]

(1917)

(The lines introducing this poem were written for inscription on the first joint memorial to the American and British soldiers who fell in the Revolutionary War. This memorial was recently dedicated at Princeton.)

Here Freedom stood, by slaughtered friend and foe,
And ere the wrath paled or that sunset died,
Looked through the ages; then, with eyes aglow,
Laid them, to wait that future, side by side.

Now lamp-lit gardens in the blue dusk shine
Through dogwood red and white,
And round the gray quadrangles, line by line,
The windows fill with light,

[1] Reprinted from *In Flanders Fields*, published by G. P. Putnam's Sons.
[2] Reprinted, by permission of the author, from *The New Morning* (Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1919).

Where Princeton calls to Magdalen, tower to tower,
Twin lanthorns of the law,
And those cream-white magnolia boughs embower
The halls of old Nassau.

The dark bronze tigers crouch on either side
Where redcoats used to pass,
And round the bird-loved house where Mercer died
And violets dusk the grass,
By Stony Brook that ran so red of old,
But sings of friendship now,
To feed the old enemy's harvest fifty-fold
The green earth takes the plough.

Through this May night if one great ghost should stray
With deep remembering eyes,
Where that old meadow of battle smiles away
Its blood-stained memories,
If Washington should walk, where friend and foe
Sleep and forget the past,
Be sure his unquenched heart would leap to know
Their hosts are joined at last.

Be sure he walks, in shadowy buff and blue,
Where those dim lilacs wave.
He bends his head to bless, as dreams come true,
The promise of that grave;
Then, with a vaster hope than thought can scan,
Touching his ancient sword,
Prays for that mightier realm of God in man:
"Hasten Thy Kingdom, Lord.

"Land of new hope, land of the singing stars,
Type of the world to be,
The vision of a world set free from wars
Takes life, takes form, from thee,
Where all the jarring nations of this earth,
Beneath the all-blessing sun,

Bring the new music of mankind to birth,
And make the whole world one."

And those old comrades rise around him there,
Old foemen, side by side,
With eyes like stars upon the brave night-air,
And young as when they died,
To hear your bells, O beautiful Princeton towers,
Ring for the world's release.
They see you, piercing like gray swords through flowers,
And smile from souls at peace.

Alfred Noyes.

ENGLISH POETRY

NOTES

[Abbreviations: **Dict.** (any unabridged dictionary, such as the *Century*, the *International*, or the *Standard*); **Cl. D.** (any good dictionary of classical mythology); **Cl. M.** (Gayley's *Classic Myths in English Literature and in Art.* Revised Edition. Ginn & Company). — References to the Introduction to Poetry are indicated by section and subsection, thus: §§ **19**; **20, 2.**]

CHAUCER

THE PROLOGUE TO THE CANTERBURY TALES

The *Canterbury Tales* were written probably during the last twelve or fifteen years of Chaucer's life, *i.e.* between 1385 and 1400. It is impossible to conjecture the order in which they were written, or to make any definite guess as to just when the *Prologue* was composed. Though the *Prologue* undoubtedly appeared at a later date than some of the *Tales*, it is measurably certain that this date was not later than 1390. This would place it nearly one hundred years before the invention of the printing-press; over one hundred years before the discovery of America; nearly two hundred and fifty years before the time of Milton's earliest poems. Owing to the remote period of this composition, the student will naturally find certain difficulties which he does not meet in poetry of a later date. He will see constant allusion to beliefs and experiences, very real in Chaucer's time, but utterly foreign to the modern world. Perhaps in no way so well as by the study of this *Prologue* can we to-day enter into the life of the England of five hundred years ago. We make the acquaintance of a language which in grammatical construction, in peculiarity of phrase, in form and meaning of word, transports us from the present to an antique world. If we would gain anything like the proper appreciation of Chaucer's verse, we must learn to read it aloud, pronouncing it as nearly as possible as he himself would have pronounced it. The following are a few rules which will apply to a solution of most of the difficulties to be met in mastering this pronunciation:

1. **Vowels** were sounded in Chaucer's time very nearly as in Latin: **ā** long or **aa**, like *a* in *father;* **ă** short, like *a* in *what* (never like *a* in *cat*); **ē** long or **ee**, sometimes like *e* in *there* and sometimes like *a* in *fate;* **ĕ** short, like *e* in *met;* **ī** (or **ȳ**) long or **ii**, like *i* in *machine;* **ĭ** (or **y**) short, like *i* in *pin;* **ō** long or **oo**, like *o* in *old* (**oo** never like *oo* in *pool*); **ŏ** short, like *o* in *obey* (never

like *o* in *not*); **ū** long, like the French *u* or German *ü*, nearly like *u* in *lute;* **ŭ** short, like *u* in *put* (never like *u* in *but*). Final **e** is sounded like *a* in *Cuba*, and is generally pronounced in Chaucer, save when it is followed by a word beginning with a vowel or the aspirate *h*. *This fact must never be lost sight of in reading.* Indeed, as a general rule, *there are in Chaucer as many syllables to be pronounced as there are vowels or diphthongs.*

2. **Diphthongs**, or double vowels, were sounded as follows: **ai** and **ay**, like *ay* in *gay*, according to some editors; but, more probably, nearly like *i* in *pine;* **ei** and **ey**, like *ai*, — that is, like *i* in *pine*. (Some editors sound it like *e* in *there*, and still others like *ei* in *veil;* but both of these pronunciations are questionable); **au** and **aw**, like *ow* in *how;* **oi** and **oy**, like *oy* in *boy;* **ou** and **ow**, like *oo* in *pool* — sometimes like long *ō* gliding into *oo* (but never as in *house* or *how*); **eu** and **ew**, like *ū* long. (See above.)

3. **Consonants** were sounded as in modern English, except as follows: **c**, hard like *k*, except before *e* and *i*, and like *s*, before *e* and *i* (never like *sh* as in *ocean*); **f**, generally like *ff* in *off* rather than *f* in *of;* **g**, hard as in *go* except before *e* and *i*, and soft as in *gin* before *e* and *i*; **gh**, nearly like *ch* in the German word *auch;* **gn**, like *n*, the vowel preceding being pronounced long; **ng**, like *ng* in *finger* — possibly sometimes like *ng* in *singing* (though Skeat does not admit this pronunciation); **r**, always rolled or trilled with the tip of the tongue; **s** final, generally like *ss* in *hiss;* **s**, between two vowels in the middle of a word, generally like *s* in *his* (**s** is never pronounced like *sh* or *zh*); **t** (never like *sh* as in *nation*); **z** (never like *zh* as in *azure*).

These are practically all the rules which need be observed by the student; for further aid he must depend on the oral instruction of the teacher. The latter may indefinitely add to these simple rules by choosing from those given in the various editions of Chaucer. Though no one at the present time can more than approximately reach the exact pronunciation of the poet, still there will be found a charm in even this approximation which will amply justify the time spent upon it.

As a further aid to the student, we have indicated those accentuations of words (mostly of Latin and of Norman-French origin) which differ from present usage; and have italicized the vowels of those syllables which are not pronounced, the assumption being that, as in Latin, there is otherwise a syllable to be sounded for every vowel or diphthong.

The *Prologue* rhymes in couplets. Many of the couplets are "run-on"; *i.e.* the thought runs on from one couplet to another, instead of being brought to a close at the end of the couplet as is generally the case in Pope and other eighteenth-century poets who employ this form of verse. (See Pope's *Rape of the Lock*, in this book.) The metre is iambic pentameter, a large proportion of the lines, however, being hypercatalectic. See INTRODUCTION to this book, §§ 19; 20, 2, 4; 24, 1. A knowledge of the metre will not infrequently aid the student in pronouncing difficult lines. Some lines are truncated, *i.e.* lacking in the first unaccented syllable. See ll. 170, 247, 294, 384, 391, and INTRODUCTION, as above; for descriptive narrative poetry see § 31, 8.

In the following notes, peculiarities of grammatical inflection, and other frequently recurring peculiarities, will be noted the first three times they occur.

1–18. 1. **Whan that.** The use of *that*, after such connectives as *when*, *if*, *because*, *after*, and the like, continued common until after the time of Shakespeare. **shoures.** Plurals end generally in *es*; sometimes in *s*. Observe how the original spelling of the poet's words seems to carry us back in feeling to his time and environment. As Mr. Ingraham says in his edition of the *Prologue*, "I see and hear in *shoures* drops of water falling from a darkened sky on field and river; while *showers* are predicted in the newspapers by those who know of the wind whence it cometh and whither it goeth." **sote**, sweet. For its more modern form, see 'swete,' l. 5. 2. **perced to the rote**, pierced to the root. The final *e* here is a sign of the dative. 3–4. **And bathed . . . flour.** "And bathed every vein (of the tree or herb) in such ('swich') moisture, by means of which quickening power, or vital energy ('vertû'), the flower is generated." (Skeat.) 5. **Zephirus.** For the gentle west wind, see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 38. **eek**, also. 6. **Inspired**, in its radical sense (from Lat. *in* + *spiro*). **holt**, wood. 7. **croppes**, shoots, tree-tops. For form of plural see note on 'shoures,' l. 1. **yonge.** The *e* is used when the definite article precedes. 7–8. **yonge sonne . . . y-ronne.** The sun on crossing the equator at the March equinox (March 12, old style) entered *Aries*, or the Ram, the first sign of the Zodiac, out of which it passed on April 11, into *Taurus*, or the Bull. Hence it is the 'young sun,' as it has passed through only the first sign of the Zodiac, the Ram. The *April* sun has, moreover, completed that half-course which falls in the Ram (*i.e.* the last portion of the Ram which extended to April 11). From the mention of a definite date in a later part of the poem, we know that the sun had also run five days into the sign of the Bull, *i.e.* that it was now the 16th of April: see picture of Zodiac in unabridged dictionary. 8. **y-ronne.** For *i* or *y* as a sign of the past participle, see note on 'yclept,' *L'Alleg.* (12). 9. **smale fowles**, little birds. Most adjectives, especially monosyllables, end in *e* when they modify plural nouns. 9. **maken**, and 10. **slepen.** Plural verbs end generally in *e*, sometimes in *en*. **ye**, eye. 11. **So . . . corâges.** Nature so spurs them on in their hearts ('corages,' from Lat. *cor*). For final *es* in 'corages,' see note on 'shoures,' l. 1, and 'croppes,' l. 7. Note the plural possessive (genitive) **hir**, and the plural objective (accusative) **hem.** 12. **longen.** For plural verb form, see note on 'maken' and 'slepen,' ll. 9, 10. **goon.** The infinitive ends generally in *e*, sometimes in *en* or *n*. 13. **palmers**, originally pilgrims who had gone to the Holy Land and had brought back a palm-branch, afterward borne as a sign of their journey. Later, as in Chaucer, the word seems to mean any pilgrim to foreign countries, who, renouncing home and property, spends his whole life in pious wanderings. **seken.** For form of infinitive, see note on 'goon,' l. 12. 14. **ferne halwes**, distant holy ones, *i.e.* the shrines of saints. *Cf.* "All Hallow-e'en," All Saints' eve. **couthe**, known. **sondry**, various. 15. **shires**, county's. The possessive (genitive) singular

of nouns usually ends in *es*. **16. Caunterbury** : see map of England. In Kent, fifty miles southeast of London. **wende**, go, as in the phrase "to wend one's way." **17. blisful**, blessed. **martir.** Thomas à Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, murdered at the altar, in 1170, by four minions of Henry II, was canonized in 1173. **seke**, seek. This is the usual form of the infinitive : see note on 'goon,' l. 12. **18. hem** : see note on 'hem,' l. 11. **holpen**, helped. The past participle of strong verbs ends in *en* or *e*. **seke**, sick.

19–34. 19. Bifel: It happened. **on a**, one. **20. Tabard** : an inn in Southwark (now a part of London). The name was derived from the sign of the inn, a *tabard*, or kind of sleeveless coat. **21. wenden** : see note on 'goon,' l. 12, and 'seken,' l. 13. **22. corâge** : see l. 11. **23. hostelrye**, inn. Look up derivation of *hotel*, *hospital*, *host*. **24. Wel**, fully. **25. by âventure**, by chance. **y-falle** : see note on l. 8. **27. wolden**, wished : see note on 'maken' and 'seken,' ll. 9 and 10, and 'longen,' l. 12. **ryde**, an infinitive modifying 'wolden.' **29. esed atte beste**, entertained in the best manner. **31. So**, to such effect. **hem** : see note on 'hem,' ll. 11 and 18. **everichon**, every-each-one, *i.e.* every single one. **32. hir** : see l. 11. **anon**, immediately. **33. made forward** (A.-S. *fore-weard*, fore-ward, precaution), made an agreement. **34. as**, where. Never in its present sense. It is generally preceded by *ther*. **I yow devyse**, I am telling you about, *i.e.* Canterbury.

35–42. 35. natheles, nevertheless. **36. pace**, proceed. **37. Me thinketh** : this does not come from the same root as the verb *think*, but from another A.-S. verb *thincan*, to appear. *Me* is a dative like the German *mir*. Hence the verb retains its radical meaning, — it appears to me. **acordaunt**, according. **39. me** : dative after the impersonal verb. **40. whiche**, what kind of men. **41. eek** : *cf.* l. 5.

43–78. The Knight. **45. ryden out**, to go on his adventures. **46. fredom**, liberality. **47. lordes**, probably the king. For the ending, see note on 'shires,' l. 15. **werre** (dative), war ; perhaps in France. **48. ther-to**, besides. **ferre**, comparative of *fer*, far. **49. hethenesse**, heathendom. *Cf.* Christendom. **51. Alisaundre**, Alexandria in Egypt, won from the Mohammedans in 1365. **52. the bord bigonne**, sat at the head of the table (at state dinners as a mark of the honor due to him). **53. Aboven alle nacioun̄s in Pruce**, above the representatives of all nations in Prussia. **54. Lettow**, Lithuania, later divided between Russia and Prussia. **reysed**, made military expeditions. **Ruce**, Russia. **56. Gernade**, Granada, in southern Spain. **eek** : *cf.* ll. 5 and 41. **57. Algezir**, Algeciras, a city on the south coast of Granada. The knight had been at this siege, in 1344. Skeat suggests that the year of this story is 1386. From this we may estimate the knight's age. **riden** : see note on l. 45. **Belmarye**, Benmarin, a Moorish kingdom in northern Africa. **58. Lyeys**, Ayas in Armenia, won from the Turks in 1367. **Satalye**, Adalia on the south coast of Asia Minor, also taken from the Turks in 1362. Observe that these are all Christian victories over the Mohammedans.

59. Grete See, the eastern Mediterranean. **60. aryve**, disembarkation (arrival) of troops. **61. mortal**, deadly (from Lat. *mors*, death). **62. Tramissene**, Tremessen, a Moorish kingdom in northern Africa. **63. In listes thryes.** He had fought for his religion three times, in lists or personal combats, having been challenged, no doubt, by some Mohammedan knight. **ay**, always. **64. ilke**, same. **65. Somtyme**, once upon a time. **Palatye**, Palathia, in Anatolia (Asia Minor). **66. Ageyn another hethen in Turkye.** He had fought with the lord of Palathia, a Christian knight, against still another heathen in Turkey. **67. sovereyn prys**, the greatest reputation. **68. thogh that** : see note on 'whan that,' l. 1. **worthy . . . wys.** Though he was a bold and distinguished man ('worthy'), he was nevertheless prudent ('wys'). **70. vileinye**, ungentlemanly speech, showing low taste or breeding. **never, no, ne, no.** Explain the force of these double negatives, remembering that even as late as Shakespeare they did not constitute an affirmative. **71. no maner wight**, no man of any kind. **72. verray**, very. **parfit**, perfect. **gentil** (Lat. *gens*), of high birth and breeding. **73. array**, dress and equipment. **74. hors**, evidently plural, as indicated by the number of the verb and of the adjective. Some neuter nouns have the same form in both numbers. **gode**, plural, see note on l. 9. **he**, *i.e.* the Knight. **gay**, gayly dressed. **75. fustian** : see *Dict.* **gipoun**, a short, closefitting coat, generally worn under armor. **76. bismotered**, soiled or stained as with blood or rust. **with his habergeoun**, from his coat of mail (A.-S. *healsbeorgan*, neck-protector). For scansion see INTRODUCTION, § 20, 2. **77. y-come** : see note on 'y-ronne,' l. 8. **viage**, journey or travels. **78. wente for to doon**, on returning, immediately started out to 'do' or go on the pilgrimage which he had vowed to make.

79–100. The Squyer. **80. lovyere**, a lover, as in romances of chivalry. **bacheler**, aspirant for knighthood. *Cf.* the phrase "bachelor of Arts," and look up derivation. **81. lokkes crulle**, locks curled. **presse**, curling tongs, or some fourteenth-century substitute for them. **82. yeer.** For number, see note on l. 74. **83. evene**, proper, well proportioned. **84. deliver**, active. **85. chivachye**, a cavalry raid (Fr. *cheval ;* Lat. *caballus*, horse). **86. Flaundres**, Flanders, a province now comprising portions of northern France and southern Belgium and Holland. **Artoys, Picardye**, Artois, Picardy, French provinces. **87. litel space**, limited time or opportunity. **88. lady**, some possessives (genitives) are uninflected. **89. Embrouded**, embroidered. **91. floytinge**, probably playing the flute, though some suggest "whistling." **95. coude endyte**, knew how to (from A.-S. *cunnan*, to know) compose. **96. Juste**, tilt or joust at tournaments. **purtreye**, portray, *i.e.* draw. **97. nightertale**, night-time. **99. servisable**, willing to be of service. **100. carf biforn**, carved in front of, or for.

101–117. The Yeman. **101. he.** Does this refer to the Knight or to the Squyer? **na-mo** : *cf.* 'na-more,' l. 98. **102. him liste**, it pleased him to. **ryde.** For the infinitive ending, see note on l. 12. **104. A sheef of pecok-arwes**, a sheaf of arrows with peacock's feathers, much liked because

of their gay appearance. **106. dresse his takel yemanly** : care for his arrows in a manner befitting a yeoman. **107. drouped noght with fetheres lowe.** He took such pains with his 'takel' that the feathers did not droop low, or get pressed out of shape. **109. not-heed**, a head cropped, and like a nut. **110. coude**, knew. **111. bracer**, a leather guard for the archer's coat-sleeve. **112. bokeler**, a buckler, or small shield. **114. Harneised wel** : equipped well, as regards hilt, sheath, and the like. **115. Cristofre**, an image of St. Christopher worn as a brooch or charm against danger. (From a Greek word meaning the bearer of Christ : see back of Webster's *Dict.*, or *Century Dict. Proper Names.*) **shene**, bright or shining. **116. bawdrik**, a broad belt worn over one shoulder and under the opposite arm ; a baldric. **117. forster**, a forester or huntsman. **soothly**, truly.

118–164. The Prioresse. **119. coy**, quiet. **120. seynt Loy**, St. Eligius or St. Eloi, a humble saint, who lived at the beginning of the seventh century. There have been many conjectures as to why the prioress invokes this particular saint. Some think it signifies that she swore not at all, since St. Eligius is said to have once refused to take an oath ; or again, perhaps, she came from the district of St. Loye's in Bedford. **121. cleped** : see note on *L'Alleg.* (12). **123. Entuned**, intoned, or chanted. **semely**, becomingly. **124. fetisly**, properly, elegantly. **125. scole of Stratford-atte-Bowe** : the dialect of French which had grown up in England, or Anglo-French, which she had doubtless learned from the Benedictine nuns of Stratford-at-Bow, near London. **127. mete**, food or meals. **129. sauce**, broth or gravy. **130. carie**, carry to her mouth. **kepe**, take care. **131. fille**, should fall. **132. curteisye**, court manners. **ful moche hir lest.** Her delight or pleasure ('lest') was very much, etc. **134. ferthing**, farthing or a fourth, hence a very small portion or morsel. **136. mete** : *cf.* l. 127. **raughte**, reached. **137. sikerly**, securely, *i.e.* certainly. **disport**, readiness to be entertained or amused. **139. peyned hir**, she took pains. **countrefete chere**, imitate the appearance or manner. **140. to been estatlich of manere**, to be stately of manners or bearing. **141. digne** (from Lat. *dignus*), worthy. **reverence**, respect or esteem. **142. conscience**, sensitiveness. **144. if that** : see note on 'whan that,' l. 1. **145. deed or bledde**, dead or were bleeding. **146. houndes**, dogs (*cf.* Ger. *hund*). **147. wastel**, cake. **148. oon**, one. **hem** : *cf.* l. 11. **149. men**, one, anybody (*cf.* Ger. *man*). **smoot it with a yerde smerte**, struck it smartly ('smerte') with a stick ('yerde'). **150. conscience** : *cf.* l. 142. **151. semely** : *cf.* l. 123. **wimpel**, a covering for the neck, or for the neck and chin, worn by nuns. **pinched**, plaited. **152. tretys**, well proportioned. **eyen**, eyes. Some few plurals end in *en*. *Cf.* oxen. **153. ther-to** : see note on l. 48. **reed**, red. **154. sikerly** : see l. 137. **156. hardily**, same as 'sikerly,' l. 154. **157. fetis**, neat. *Cf.* l. 124. **war**, aware. **159. peire**, pair or set. **gauded al with grene**, having every eleventh bead a large green gaud, or gaudy, — the bead in the rosary at which the "*Paternoster*" is recited. **160. shene** : see l. 115. **161. crowned A.** The brooch which the prioress wore appears to have been a locket, rather

than a clasp pin, and to have had the form of a capital A surmounted by a crown. 162. **Amor vincit omnia**, the well-known quotation from Virgil. 163–164. **Another Nonne . . . Preestes three.** Take note that the second nun, or chaplain of the prioress, and the three attendant priests, bring the number of characters mentioned thus far to eight. Chaucer's 'Wel nyne and twenty,' l. 24, are really thirty, exclusive of the poet himself and Harry Bailey, the host of the Tabard.

165–207. The Monk. 165. **a fair for the maistrye**, a man who seemed likely to excel, or to receive promotion. 166. **out-rydere**, the officer of a monastery whose business it was to look after the outlying manors belonging to the order. **venerye**, hunting. 168. **deyntee** (Lat. *dignitas*), valuable. 170. **Ginglen**, jingling of the bells on the bridle. 172. **as** : see note on l. 34. **keper of the celle**, superior of the monastery. 173. **reule** : in apposition with *it* in the next line. **seint Maure** and **seint Beneit.** Benedict, the founder of the Benedictine order in the sixth century, and Maure, his disciple, laid down the oldest forms of monastic discipline in the church. **som-del streit**, somewhat strict, narrow. 175. **ilke**, same. **olde thinges pace**, old things pass by. 176. **And heeld after the newe world the space**, "held his course in conformity with the new order of things." (Skeat.) 177. **yaf nat of**, gave not for. **pulled hen**, a plucked hen — the value of which is assumed to be very small. 179. **recchelees**, heedless of the regulations of church discipline. 180. **waterlees**, out of water. 181. **this is . . . cloistre.** This line is evidently in explanation of l. 179. 182. **thilke**, that same. 183. **And I seyde**, etc. Observe how the poet appears to draw out the monk by pretending to agree with his views. 184. **What**, why. **wood**, mad, crazy. 185. **to poure**, by poring. 186. **swinken**, toil. 187. **As Austin bit**, as St. Augustine bids. St. Augustine (fourth century), as well as St. Benedict (l. 173), taught that monks should be diligent, not only in study, but also in manual labor. 188. **Lat . . . reserved**, let St. Augustine keep his work to himself. 189. **pricasour**, hard rider. 190. **fowel** : *cf.* l. 9. 191. **Of priking**, in spurring ; hard riding. 192. **lust**, desire or pleasure. 193. **seigh**, saw. **purfiled**, edged or fringed. 194. **grys**, a gray fur, very costly. 198. **balled**, bald. 199. **anoint**, anointed. 200. **in good point** (Fr. *en bon point*, — embonpoint), in good condition, meaning about the same as 'full fat.' 201. **eyen** : see note on l. 152. **stepe**, prominent. 202. **That stemed as a forneys of a leed**, that glowed as a furnace under a caldron (of lead). 203. **His botes souple**, his boots soft and pliable. **greet estat**, fine condition. 205. **for-pyned goost**, ghost wasted away by torment. 207. **berye.** Observe how portraits of the characters are linked together by the division of the couplet between them. *Cf.* 269, 270; 387, 388; 541, 542.

208–269. The Frere. 208. **wantown**, lively. 209. **limitour**, a mendicant friar, who had a definite limit assigned to him in which he might solicit alms. **solempne** (Lat. *solemnis*), pompous or self-satisfied. 210. **ordres foure.** The four orders of the mendicant friars were the Dominicans, the Franciscans, the Carmelites, and the Augustinians. **can**, knows. 211. **dal-**

iaunce and fair langage, entertaining and flattering talk. **214. post**, as we now say "a pillar of the church." **216. frankeleyn**, a wealthy landholder; a sort of country squire. **over-al**, everywhere. **217. worthy** : see note on l. 459. **220. licentiat**, a friar licensed by the pope to hear confessions, grant absolution, or administer penance — in all cases independently of the local curate or parish priest, whose powers were more restricted. *Cf.* l. 219. **223. yeve** (same as 'yive,' l. 225), give. **224. as** : see note on l. 34. **wiste to han**, knew ('wiste') that he would gain. **pitaunce**, literally, mess of victuals. **225–232. For . . . freres** : *cf.* ll. 184–188. In both passages Chaucer with sly humor and pretended seriousness reflects the process by which his characters reason. **227. yaf**, past tense of 'yeve' or 'yive.' **he dorste make avaunt**, he (the friar) dares make his boast. **230. may**, can. **him sore smerte**, though it pains him sorely. **232. men moot** : one ought to. For 'men,' see note on l. 149. **233. His tipet was ay farsed**, his cape was always stuffed. **234. yeven** : see note on 'goon,' l. 12. **236. rote**, some kind of stringed instrument, perhaps a sort of guitar. **237. Of . . . prys**, *i.e.* in the singing of ballads he utterly (or absolutely) bore away (or took) the prize. **238. His nekke whyt**, etc. Notice Chaucer's *naïveté*. He is restricted by no set rules of poetic art. Whether consciously or unconsciously, he seems to pass, in his descriptions, from one point to another, with a child's simple delight at finding new things to see. Thus, in successive lines, his 'frere' sings ballads, has a white neck, is athletic, fond of conviviality, self-seeking. **241. everich** : see note on 'everichon,' l. 31. **hostiler**, the keeper of a 'hostelrye' : *cf.* l. 23. **tappestere**, barmaid. The masculine form was tapster. **beggestere** (242) is likewise the feminine of beggar. **242. Bet**, better (adv.). **lazar**, leper (from *Lazarus*). **243. swich**: *cf.* l. 3. **244. as by his facultee**, considering his abilities. **245. seke** : *cf.* l. 18. **246. honest**, seemly or becoming. **avaunce**, advance one. **247. poraille**, poor people. **249. over-al** : see l. 216. **as** : see note on l. 34. **251. vertuous**, efficient in his undertakings. **253. sho**, shoe. **254. In principio**, from *John* i. 1. *In principio erat verbum*, evidently a part of his religious ministrations; or, perhaps, to impress his hearer with his knowledge of Latin. **255. ferthing** : see l. 134. **256. purchas**, the profits of his begging. **rente**, income. **257. And . . . whelpe**, "And he could romp about exactly as if he were a puppy dog." (Skeat.) **258. love-dayes** : days appointed for settling disputes out of court and by an umpire — in this case the friar. **260. cope**, a cloak worn by priests. **262. semi-cope**, a short 'cope,' or cape. **263. presse**, mould. **264. lipsed, for his wantownesse**, lisped in affectation. **269. cleped** : *cf.* l. 121.

270–284. The Marchant. **271. mottelee**, motley, a many-colored suit. **272. Flaundrish**, Flemish. **273. fetisly** : *cf.* l. 124. **274. resons**, opinions. **solempnely** : see 'solempne,' l. 209. **275. Souninge . . . winning**, always harping on his increasing profits. **276. were kept**, *i.e.* were guarded, kept open. **for any thing**, at any cost. **277. Middelburgh**, a port on an island in the Netherlands. **Orewelle**, the former name of an English port exactly

opposite Middleburg. The merchants' ships travelled in the pirate-infested waters between these two ports. **278. Wel . . . selle.** He knew how to sell to advantage in various money markets the foreign coins (*sheeld*, a French coin) which he had accumulated in the course of his business. **279. well his wit bisette,** used his wits to advantage. **280. wiste** : *cf.* l. 224. **wight,** person : *cf.* l. 71. **281. estatly,** discreet. **governaunce,** the management of his business. **282. chevisaunce,** arrangements for borrowing. **284. noot,** know not.

285–308. 285. clerk. This clerk (scholar) of Oxford was an aspirant for the priesthood. In Chaucer's time the word clerk meant simply *scholar*. Look up its derivation and trace its history to its present meaning. **Oxenford.** The form of the word suggests its possible derivation. For another conjecture, see note on *Lycidas*, l. 103. **286. y-go,** gone. **288. he,** the scholar. **I undertake,** I venture to say. **289. ther-to** : *cf.* ll. 48, 153. **290. overest courtepy,** uppermost short cloak. **291. benefice** : see *Dict.* under the definition which has to do with the church. **292. office.** A secular calling, such as offered by medicine or law, was often taken up for a time by the clergy of the Middle Ages. **293. For him was lever have,** he would liefer (more gladly) have. **296. fithel or gay sautrye,** fiddle or gay psaltery. **297. al be,** although : *cf.* modern *albeit*. **philosophre,** Chaucer is here making a play on the word. Other than the meaning as already applied to the clerk is the meaning *alchemist* — one who has "found the philosophers' stone." This our Oxford scholar was not, Chaucer says, for, if he could *make* gold, l. 298 would not be true. **299. hente,** get. **302. hem** : *cf.* l. 11. **scoleye,** attend school. **303. cure,** thought or care (from Lat. *cura*). **304. o,** one. **305. in forme and reverence,** in precise and dignified manner. **306. hy sentence,** lofty significance. **307. Souninge in,** tending to: *cf.* l. 275.

309–330. The Sergeant of the Lawe. **309. war,** wary. **wys** : *cf.* l. 68. **310. parvys,** a church porch, probably of St. Paul's, where, it is said, lawyers used to meet for consultation. **312. reverence,** dignity. **314. Justyce in assyse,** a judge sent into the country to hold court (assizes). **315. patente,** letters patent, or the official document of the king. **pleyn commissioun** (Lat. *plenus*), full authority. **318. purchasour,** conveyancer (see *Dict.*). **no-wher noon**: see note on l. 70. Observe that 'noon' does not mean *known*. **319. fee simple,** the most absolute form of ownership or possession of landed property. **in effect.** This seems to mean that the law sergeant could so cleverly, in his conveyancing, remove, or seem to remove, defects in title and other limitations of absolute ownership, that the deed, as he would hand it over, would practically seem to give possession in 'fee simple'; and finally (320) that the conveyance could not be invalidated ('infect'). **321–322. No-wher . . . was.** Note how the lawyer delights to "bustle around" to indicate how busy a man he is. **323. In termes,** in the exact words, *verbatim*. **caas,** cases ; for number, see note on l. 74. **domes,** decisions. **324. William,** the Conqueror, who reigned from 1066 to 1087. **325. endyte** : *cf.* l. 95. **make a thing,** *i.e.* draw up a legal document. 326. **pinche at,** *i.e.*

find fault with. **327. coude** : see l. 95. **328. medlee cote**, a coat of mixed color. **329. Girt . . . smale**, encircled by a girdle of silk, having upon it small ornaments or bars.

331–360. The Frankeleyn: see note on l. 216. **332. dayes-ye** : *cf.* 'ye,' l. 10. This is the derivation of daisy. **333. complexioun**, temperament. **sangwyn**, ardent or hopeful. Some prefer to interpret this line literally, making 'sangwyn' mean ruddy (from Lat. *sanguis*, blood). **334. by the morwe**, in the morning. **sop**, bread or cake dipped in some liquid. **335. delyt**, pleasure. **wone**, habit, wont. **336–338. Epicurus . . . parfyt.** He was a 'son' (*i.e.* true disciple) of Epicurus, a Greek philosopher (342–270 B.C.), who was of the opinion that pleasure was the *summum bonum*. **340. Seint Julian**, the patron saint of hospitality. **341. after oon**, after one standard, *i.e.* the best. **342. envyned**, stocked with wine. **no-wher noon** : see note on l. 318. **343. bake** : see note on 'holpen,' l. 18. **345. It snewed**, it abounded. **347. After**, in accordance with. **348. mete** : see l. 127. **soper** (supper), drink. **349. mewe**, coop in which fowls were fattened. **350. breem**, bream (see *Dict.*). **luce**, pike. **stewe**, a small pond in which fish were kept to supply the table. **351. Wo was**, as we now say, "Woe be to." **but-if**, unless. **sauce** : *cf.* l. 129. **352. Poynaunt**, pungent or biting. **gere**, utensils. **353. table dormant.** Permanent tables on legs were now supplanting boards laid across trestles, which had been previously used. The Frankeleyn had such a table and kept it set, thus showing his hospitable nature. **355. sessiouns**, sittings held by the justices of the peace. **lord and sire**, the presiding officer. **356. knight of the shire**, representative of the county ('shire') in parliament. **357. anlas**, a short, two-edged dagger. **gipser**, a pouch or purse. **359. shirreve**, shire reve, chief magistrate of the shire. *Cf.* word sheriff. **countour**, an auditor of accounts. *Cf.* the modern comptroller. **360. vavasour**, a sub-vassal, next in dignity to a baron.

361–378. These lines, which have been omitted, describe the following : the Haberdassher, or dealer in small wares ; the Carpenter ; the Webbe, or weaver ; the Dyere ; the Tapicer, or upholsterer. These are all, evidently, men of ability and standing in the community, as well as leading members of the various trade guilds to which they belong.

379–387. The Cook. **379. for the nones**, for the nonce, *i.e.* for then once, for that occasion. **380. mary-bones**, marrow-bones. **381. poudre-marchant tart**, a kind of tart flavoring-powder. **galingale**, a sort of spice-like root. **383. coude** : see l. 95. **sethe**, boil. **384. mortreux**, kind of stew or thick soup. **385. greet harm**, a pity. **386. shine**, shin. **mormal** (Fr. *mortmal*, Lat. *mortuum malum*, dead sore), cancer. **387. blank-manger**, a kind of fricassee, made of fish or fowl, etc., with a white sauce. For suggestion on this line, see note on l. 238.

388–410. The Shipman. **388. woning**, dwelling. **389. woot**, know. **Dertemouth**, Dartmouth, an important port in Chaucer's time, in Devonshire. **390. rouncy**, farm horse. **as he couthe**, as best he could. Being a sailor he knew little of horses. **391. falding**, a coarse cloth. **392. laas**,

lace or cord. **394. hote somer** : perhaps any ' hot summer ' ; or, as some think, the especially hot seasons of 1351 or 1370. **395. good felawe**, as we say " jolly good fellow." **396. draughte**, cask. **y-drawe**, drawn, *i.e.* stolen. **397. From Burdeux-ward**, from-ward, *i.e.* from the direction of : *cf.* to-ward, originally also thus separated. **whyl that** : *cf.* ' whan than,' l. 1. **chapman**, pedler. **sleep**, a form of the past tense ; also *slepte*. **398. Of nyce . . . keep**, he was not troubled with conscientious scruples. **399. hyer hond**, as we say, " upper hand." **400. By water . . . lond**, threw them overboard to get home as best they might, as he would express it ; really, to drown. **401. craft**, skill. **402. bisydes**, beside, or all around him. **403. herberwe**, harbor. **lodemenage**, art of pilotage : *cf.* lode star. **404. Hulle**, Hull in Yorkshire, England. **Cartâge**, Carthage. **405. wys** : see l. 68. **to undertake**, in his undertakings. **408. Gootlond**, Gotland, an island in the Baltic. **Finistere**, Finisterre, a cape in western Spain. **409. cryke**, a creek having a harbor. **Britayne**, Brittany. **410. y-cleped** : see note on *L'Allegro* (12). **Maudelayne**. It is interesting to know that there is still preserved in the Custom-house records of Dartmouth for 1386 an entry of a ship of this name. This may throw some light on the date at which the *Prologue* was composed.

411–444. The Doctour. **411. Phisyk** (413, 'phisik'), physic, medicine in general. **414. astronomye**, astrology. In the Middle Ages the position of sun, moon, and planets, in relation to one another, was thought to have an important bearing on proper medical treatment. As these astronomical conditions changed from hour to hour, so must the treatment change with them. **415–416. He kepte . . . magik naturel.** By his knowledge of ' natural magic,' or the phenomena of nature, he kept the treatment of his patient from hour to hour in conformity with the conditions mentioned above. **417–418. wel . . . pacient.** He could, moreover, make waxen images and treat them instead of his patient. If the patient did not recover when the images were treated, it merely proved that they had not been made at the right time. Hence the doctor's art largely consisted in his ability to predict or choose (' fortunen ') the right (' ascendent ') moment, according to astrology, for treating the images. **420. hoot, cold, moiste, drye.** These were, according to medieval theories, the four humors, the proper proportions of which were essential to the health of the human body. Disease (' maladye ') lay in an excess or defect of some one of these humors, and was treated accordingly. **421. engendred** : *cf.* l. 4. **423. cause and rote** (root) are nominative absolutes before the participle ' y-knowe ': *cf.* ablative absolute in Latin. **424. bote**, remedy. **426. letuaries**, electuaries or syrups, as distinguished from **drogges** (drugs), powders, or dry medicines. **427–428. For ech . . . biginne.** Each had long been serviceable to the other. The druggist recommends the physician ; the physician makes his patients patronize the druggist. **429. Esculapius**, god of medicine, son of Apollo : see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 38, 104. **430–434. Deiscorides . . . Gilbertyn.** These are the authors of Greek, Arabian, Moorish, and English text-books on

medicine used by physicians of the Middle Ages. Dioscorides, Rufus, and Galen were Greeks, about the second century ; Hippocrates ('Ypocras') was a Greek of the fifth century. Haly, Serapion, Rhasis, Avicenna, Averroes, and Damascenus were Arabian physicians, living from the ninth to the twelfth century. Constantine was a Moor of the eleventh century. Bernard was a Frenchman of Chaucer's time. Gilbertine and Gatesden were Englishmen of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, respectively. **439. sangwin and pers**, red and sky-blue. **440. taffata and sendal**, thin silks. **441. esy of dispence**, economical. **442. pestilence.** Skeat gives as dates of pestilence in England 1348, 1349, 1362, 1369, and 1376. The doctor had made money in these pestilences, and purposed to keep it. His outlay was only for the rich dress that his position demanded of him. **443–444. For . . . special.** One of the most witty touches of the poem. Gold in some liquid form was considered a valuable medicine. Hence, with scientific enthusiasm(?), this doctor was collecting gold. Pronounce 'cordial' and 'special' as trisyllables.

445–476. The Good Wyf of Bathe. **445. Good wyf**, the mistress of a household — a woman of independent fortune. **of bisyde**, from the vicinity of. **446. som-del**, somewhat, some deal : *cf.* the expression, a great deal. **scathe**, too bad. **447. haunt**, skill. **448. Ypres and Gaunt.** Ypres and Ghent, cities of Flanders, were noted for their cloth manufactories. **450. offring.** Gifts of alms or offerings were taken up by the giver and laid upon the altar. In taking these forward, worshippers were expected to observe the proper order of precedence. The Wife of Bath, because of her position, was usually given first place, and was very angry at any one who might presume to go before her. **453. coverchiefs**, kerchiefs, or coverings for the head. (Fr. *chef*, from Lat. *caput*.) **ground**, texture. **454. ten pound.** The ornaments upon these kerchiefs made them heavy. The words 'I dorste swere' show that Chaucer is playfully exaggerating the weight. **457. streite**, tightly. **moiste**, supple. **459. worthy.** This word as used by Chaucer suggests both respectability and wealth : *cf.* l. 217. **460. chirche-dore.** In the Middle Ages the church porch was often the place of the marriage ceremony. **461. Withouten other companye**, besides other suitors. **462. as nouthe** (now then), at present. The parenthetical expression is suggestive of Kipling's "But that's another story." **463. thryes**, thrice. **465. Boloigne**, Boulogne, to see an image of the Virgin, often visited by pilgrims. **466. Galice at seint Jame**, Galicia, in northwestern Spain, where there was a famous shrine of St. James. **Cologne**, Cologne, the reputed burial-place of the three Wise Men of the East. **467. cqude**, knew : *cf.* use in l. 95. **468. Gat-tothed**, having the teeth far apart. The origin of 'gat' is uncertain, *gap*, *gate*, and *goat* having all been suggested by different editors. **soothly for to seye**, to tell the truth. Note the poet's pity for her misfortune, and *cf.* l. 446. **469. amblere** : ambler, an easy-going horse. **470. Y-wimpled** : see l. 151. **471. bokeler** : see l. 112. **targe** : see *Dict.* **472. foot-mantel.** This seems to be a riding skirt of some kind, reaching to the feet. **474. carpe**, talk or chat ; not in the present sense of finding fault. **475. Of remedyes,**

modifies ' carpe.' The relative *which* is understood after ' remedyes.' **476. coude . . . daunce,** knew the old game : see ll. 460–461.

477–528. The poure Persoun. One of the finest characters in English poetry : *cf.* the parson in Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* (137–192). **478. Persoun of a toun,** country parson or parish priest. **480. clerk** : see l. 285. **481. wolde,** desired to. **482. parisshens,** parishioners. **485. y-preved,** proved. **ofte sythes,** ofttimes. **486. Full looth . . . tythes.** He was very loth to excommunicate (' cursen ') anybody for not paying his tithes. For ' tithes,' see *Dict.* **487. yeven** : *cf.* l. 234. **out of doute,** without doubt : *cf. Merchant of Venice,* I, 1 (21). **489. offring,** the contributions he had received: *cf.* l. 450. **substaunce,** his income from his benefice. **490. han suffisaunce,** have sufficient, or all he desired. **492. lafte nat,** neglected not. **for,** on account of. **493. meschief,** misfortune. **494. ferreste,** farthest. **muche and lyte,** great and small. **497. wroghte and taughte.** He " practised what he preached." **498. gospel** : see *Matthew* v. 19. **tho,** those. **499. figure** (accented on last syllable), figure of speech. What figure is it? Explain it. **ther-to** : see l. 48. **502. lewed,** ignorant, uneducated ; hence layman, since learning was largely confined to the clergy. **503. take keep,** take heed, *i.e.* stop to think about it. **504. dirty,** the reading of Skeat's text. **507–511. He . . . withholde.** It was a custom among many country priests to sublet their benefices at a profit to themselves ; and then either to attach themselves to some religious brotherhood by which they might be supported and kept away from their duties (' withholde '), or to get a lucrative " job " in some London church (such as St. Paul's) at singing masses for the founders of the chantries. **508, 509. And leet** (left), **And ran.** Supply ' nat ' (not) with each verb. **510. chaunterye,** chantry : see *Dict.* **513. wolf.** Explain the figure. **516. despitous,** oversevere, contemptuous, despiteful. **517. daungerous,** reserved, cold. **digne,** haughty, repellent. **518. discreet and benigne,** tactful and kind. **519. fairnesse,** his own righteous (fair) life. **521. But,** unless. **523. snibben** (snub), rebuke, reprove. **for the nones,** for the nonce, as the occasion demanded. See note on l. 379. **524. trowe,** trow : see *Dict.* **525. wayted after,** expected, looked for (*i.e.* from other people). **526. Ne . . . conscience,** he did not set up for himself a fussy (or specious?) conscience, *i.e.* did not wrap himself up in a cloak of sanctity.

529–541. The Plowman. **529. Plowman,** a poor farmer. No one who reads the description of this humble but pure-souled man and of his brother, ' the poure Persoun,' can for a moment believe that Chaucer was irreligious or a scoffer at religion. It is the personal selfishness and self-indulgence of the monk, the friar, the summoner, and the pardoner which he is satirizing, rather than the religion of which they were unworthy representatives. (*who*) **was his brother.** This relationship is interesting as showing the frequently humble origin of the secular priesthood of Chaucer's time. **530. That hadde . . . fother,** who had drawn (' y-lad ') many a cart-load (' fother ') of manure. **531. swinker,** laborer : see ' swinken,' l.

186. **534. thogh him gamed or smerte.** Some take this to mean simply "in joy or woe"; others, "though his piety advanced or retarded his worldly interests." Which seems the more plausible interpretation? **533–535. God loved . . . him-selve** : see *Mark* xii. 33. **536. ther-to** : see l. 48. **dyke**, make ditches. **delve** : see *Dict.* **537. wight** : see *Dict.* **539. tythes** : *cf.* l. 486. **540. swink** : *cf.* l. 188. **catel**, property : *cf.* the modern chattels and cattle (which in early ages formed a large part of a man's property). **541. tabard** : see l. 20. **mere.** To ride upon a mare was not considered dignified, at least for people of fashion. For the incomplete couplet, see note on l. 207.

542–544. In these lines the poet sums up the remaining characters. **542. Reve.** The reve (A.-S. *geréfa*, an officer) was a kind of private bailiff or steward of some nobleman, and overseer of his estate. **Millere.** The miller was a characteristic figure of the day, when each man took his own grain to the mill to be ground into the flour needed in the household. He is a sort of comic character in early literature — a typical rascal. **543. Somnour.** A summoner, or apparitor, was the messenger or officer who served the legal papers summoning delinquents to appear before the ecclesiastical courts. **Pardoner**, a seller of indulgences, or "absolution from the censure and public penance of the church" (Webster's *Dict.*). **544. Maunciple.** The steward or caterer on whom devolves the task of purchasing provisions for a college, an inn of court, etc.: see Inns of Court in *Dict.* **na-mo** : *cf.* ll. 98, 101.

545–566. The Miller : see note on l. 542. **545. carl**, fellow : see churl in *Dict.* **for the nones** : see ll. 379 and 523. The phrase seems here a mere expletive, with no particular meaning ; such a phrase as "for this gear" found frequently in Shakespeare. **547. proved wel**, was easily proved true. **over-al** : see l. 216. **548. ram**, a common prize in wrestling matches. **549. a thikke knarre**, a thick-set fellow. **550. nolde** (ne-wolde), not be willing to. **of**, off. **harre**, (its) hinges. **551. at a renning.** This feat seems rather incredible, considering that the doors of that time were decidedly substantial affairs. **554. cop right**, very top. **557. nose-thirles** (nose-drills), nostrils. **558. bokeler** : *cf.* l. 112. **559. forneys**, furnace. **560. jangler**, a babbler or idle talker. **goliardeys**, a buffoon, a teller of low stories. **561. that**, the subject of his babbling. **harlotryes**, coarse or ribald jests. **562. tollen thryes.** When the miller received the grain for grinding he was accustomed to take four or five per cent of it as a toll. This miller would steal part of it, besides taking three times his proper toll. Remember that *corn* in England is a generic name for wheat, barley, rye, etc. **563. thombe of gold.** Two explanations have been suggested : (1) that his thumb, as it rubbed the meal against his finger, was so sensitive that he could detect its quality by touch ; and (2) that the term is a joke based on the old proverb, — "Every honest miller has a golden thumb." **pardee**, originally on oath (Fr. *par dieu*) ; but later, simply indeed, truly. **566. And . . . towne.** Thus the miller and his bagpipe conducted this odd cavalcade out of London. The bagpipe is not, as many think, a native Scottish instrument.

567–586. These lines, which are omitted from this volume, describe the Maunciple : see note on l. 544.

587–622. The Reve : see note on l. 542. **587. colerik**, choleric or irascible. **590. His top . . . biforn**, The top of his head was docked in front (' biforn ') after the fashion of a priest's tonsure. **592. Y-lyk**, like. **y-sene**, to be seen, visible. **593. coude** : see l. 95. **gerner**, garner or granary. **594. auditour**, auditor : see *Dict.* **on him winne**, get the better of him, *i.e.* by proving his accounts to be incorrect. **597. neet**, cattle : *cf.* " neat's tongue," *Merchant of Venice*, I, 1 ; and " neat's leather," *Julius Caesar*, I, 1. **dayerye**, dairy. **598. hors** : see note on l. 74. **stoor**, farm stock. **600. And . . . rekening**, According to contract he had been handing in his accounts. **602. Ther . . . arrerage.** No one could show that he had embezzled any of his lord's money : *cf.* l. 594. By twice suggesting this fact, and hinting at the extent of the reeve's private fortune (l. 609), the poet indicates his suspicions. **603. baillif**, perhaps an understeward. **herde**, herdsman. **hyne**, hind, farm laborer. **604. sleighte**, trickery. **covyne**, deceit. **605. adrad**, afraid. **the deeth**, probably the pestilence : see note on l. 442. **606. woning**, dwelling. **609. astored prively**, secretly stored or furnished with wealth. **610–611. His lord . . . good.** He could craftily please his lord by giving or lending (' lene ') him of his own (the lord's) property which he (the reeve) had previously purloined. **612. thank, cote, hood**, in return for this supposed favor. **613. mister**, trade. **614. wrighte**, workman. **615. stot**, stallion. **616. pomely**, dappled. **highte**, was called. **617. surcote**, overcoat. **pers** : see l. 439. **619. Northfolk**, Norfolk. **which** : which and who were used interchangeably until after Shakespeare. **620. Bisyde** : see l. 445. **621. Tukked . . . aboute** : with a cord or girdle around his loose coat, like a friar. **622. And ever . . . route.** Was this owing to his slow horse, or on account of unsociability?

622–668. The Somnour : see note on l. 543. **624. cherubinnes face**, cherubs being represented as fat, round, and rosy. **625. sawcefleem**, red and pimpled. **narwe**, narrow. **626. And quyk . . . sparwe**, the reading of Morris's text. **627. scalled browes** : scabby, or scurvy black brows. **piled berd**, thin and straggling beard. **629. litarge**, litharge or lead monoxide. **630. Boras**, borax. **ceruce** : ceruse, a cosmetic containing white lead. **oille of tartre**, cream of tartar. **632. whelkes**, pimples or blotches. **633. knobbes**, large pimples. **636. wood** : *cf.* l. 184. **639. termes**, terms or Latin phrases, probably learned out of the legal papers which he served as summoner. **643. Can clepen " Watte,"** can call out Walter (as a parrot of to-day would cry " Poll "). **644. grope**, test him in any other point. **645. philosophye**, learning. **646. " Questio quid iuris,"** The question (is) what (is the) law? This is one of the ' termes,' l. 639. **647. gentil harlot**, good-natured rascal. **kinde**, genial. **650. good felawe**, a boon companion. **wikked syn.** The reading is from Morris's text. **651. atte fulle**, entirely. **652. pulle.** Secretly he could pluck a finch, an

early English expression, meaning he could "cheat a greenhorn." **653. o-wher**, anywhere. **655. erchedeknes curs**, excommunication from the Archdeacon : *cf.* 'cursen,' l. 486. **656. But-if** : see l. 351. **657. For . . . be**. The Somnour, who, from his official position, pretends to know all about such things, drops a hint to his friend that the threat of excommunication and the 'helle' to which it consigns one is simply a means of extorting money. **659–662. But . . . significavit.** Chaucer is undoubtedly sincere in his denunciation of this teaching of the Somnour. Every guilty man, he says, should dread for himself ('him') excommunication, and the writ of excommunication (beginning "*Significavit nobis venerabilis pater*," etc.), for this ('curs') is just as surely death to the soul as absolution ('assoilling') is its salvation : see note on l. 529. **662. war him**, let him beware of. **663. In daunger**, in his control or authority. **at his owene gyse**, after his own fashion. **664. yonge girles**, young people of either sex (a meaning now obsolete). **665. hir** : see note on l. 11. **reed**, adviser. **666. gerland.** Skeat thinks this garland to be not an ivy wreath, as it is generally explained, but a large hoop decorated with ribbons and roses. **667. ale stake**, also according to Skeat, is a stake projecting horizontally from the side of an inn, and is intended as a place on which the garland shall be hung. **668. A bokeler . . . cake.** Observe how much suggestion, as to the character of the Somnour, Chaucer gets into this one line. Also notice the absence of regular order of description here and elsewhere : see note on l. 238.

669–714. The Pardoner : see note on l. 543. **670. Rouncival**, the Hospital of the Blessed Mary of Rouncyvalle in London. **672. Com hider, love, to me.** Evidently a popular song of the day, but rather oddly chosen for a churchman. Observe how 'Rome' must have been pronounced to allow it to rhyme with 'tō′me.' **673. stif burdoun**, a deep bass accompaniment. **676. stryke of flex**, hank of flax. **677. ounces**, strands. **679. colpons** (*cf.* coupons), shreds. **oon and oon**, one by one. **681. trussed**, packed. **682. Him thoughte** : *cf.* methought, and see note on l. 37. **jet**, fashion, style. **683. Dischevelee.** We can picture the thin, straight, wax-colored hair blowing in every direction. **685. vernicle** : a small copy of the vernicle, or St. Veronica's handkerchief, preserved at St. Peter's. The pardoner had doubtless secured this token on his recent visit to Rome : see Veronica in *Dict.* **687. Bret-ful**, brimful. **691. his . . . bare.** This reading is from Skeat's text. **692. of his craft** : *cf.* l. 401. **Berwik into Ware**, Berwick in the extreme north of England to Ware in the south, *i.e.* all England : *cf.* the expression "from the Atlantic to the Pacific." **694. male**, bag or 'wallet' (ll. 681 and 686). **pilwe-beer**, pillow case. **695. lady**, the Virgin Mary. For form of possessive, see note on l. 88. **696. gobet**, a small fragment. **698. hente**, took, enlisted as a disciple : *cf.* l. 299. **699. croys of latoun**, cross of latten, a kind of brass much used in making church utensils. **ful of stones**, set with precious stones, though probably imitations. **700. pigges bones**, which he evidently was exhibiting as those of some saint.

There is no doubt that Chaucer wished to portray this pardoner as a cheat and impostor. This, however, does not justify critics in assuming that Chaucer was in any sense contemptuous of the Church or its worthy representatives. **702. person**, same as 'persoun,' l. 478. **up-on lond**, in the country. **703. Up-on a day**, in one day. **704. tweye**, two. **705. japes**, tricks. **706. He . . . apes.** He made dupes of both parson and people. **708. ecclesiaste** : see the noun ecclesiastic in *Dict.* **709. rede**, interpret or explain. **710. alderbest**, best of all. **712. moste**, had to, must. **affyle his tonge**, polish up his language. **713. coude** : see l. 95.

715–724. 716. Thestat, the estate : *cf.* 'of what degree,' l. 40. **tharray**, the array : *cf.* l. 41. **the nombre** : see note on ll. 163–164. **719. highte** : see l. 616. **Belle**, evidently another inn in Southwark. **721. baren**, bore or conducted. **us** : the personal pronoun used for the reflexive. **ilke** : *cf.* l. 175. **723. viage** : *cf.* l. 77.

725–858. In the remaining lines of the *Prologue* Chaucer, after justifying any possible coarseness or defects in his poem, explains its plan. The host of the Tabard Inn proposes that the pilgrims beguile their journey by telling stories, each of them narrating two on the way to Canterbury and two more on the way back. The travellers gladly agree. Next morning, as they go on their way, it falls to the Knight's lot to tell the first tale. If we count the characters in the *Prologue* as thirty-one, this plan would call for one hundred and twenty-four stories. But the actual number is twenty-four, and of these two are interrupted and two are unfinished (see *Il Penseroso*, ll. 109–115, and notes).

It may interest the student to know which characters actually took part in this story-telling. The order given by the *Ellesmere* manuscript, from which our text is taken, is as follows : (1) Knight ; (2) Miller ; (3) Reeve ; (4) Cook (only begun); (5) Man of Law ; (6) Wife of Bath ; (7) Friar ; (8) Summoner ; (9) Clerk ; (10) Merchant ; (11) Squire (only half told); (12) Franklin ; (13) Doctor ; (14) Pardoner ; (15) Shipman ; (16) Prioress ; (17) The Poet ; (18) The Poet in his Second Tale ; (19) Monk ; (20) Nun's Priest ; (21) Second Nun ; (22) Canon's Yeoman (a new character who had joined the party on the fourth day); (23) Manciple ; (24) Parson.

SPENSER

FAERIE QUEENE

Gloriana, queen of Fairyland, while holding at her court a solemn festival lasting twelve days, sends out each day a noble knight to do battle against some impersonation of vice or error. This is, in general, the plan of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. The day's adventures of each knight occupy in turn a book of the poem. Each of the twelve champions is supposed to be a representative or embodiment of some one of the twelve virtues, and Prince Arthur (not yet made king), who is to marry Gloriana at the end of the poem, com-

bines the virtues in their highest degree. The poem is hence an allegory, picturing the human soul in its struggle toward perfection. It is linked with the age in which its author lived, partly by symbolizing actual contemporary religious and political struggles, and partly, as some think, by portraying actual men and women of the time under the guise of the knights and ladies of the story. Thus, Gloriana is Queen Elizabeth ; Prince Arthur may be Leicester or Sidney ; the Red Cross Knight, possibly Raleigh ; Duessa, Mary, Queen of Scots.

The student who is interested in the poem is advised to proceed with Kitchin's edition of the First Book (Clarendon Press, Oxford), and then to buy a complete edition, such as the Globe (Macmillan). Only six books of the *Faerie Queene* were published : the first three, the legends of Holiness, Temperance, and Chastity, in 1590 ; the last three, of Friendship, Justice, and Courtesy, six years later. Portions of a seventh book, on Constancy, were brought to light after the poet's death.

The metrical system of the *Faerie Queene* has been referred to in the INTRODUCTION, §§ **19**; **24**, 5. It was invented by Spenser, and has accordingly been called the Spenserian stanza. The stanza consists of nine lines, eight of them being 5 *xa* or iambic pentameter, and the ninth 6 *xa*, or iambic hexameter. The eight lines in heroic (*i.e.* epic, or 5 *xa*) measure are made up of two quatrains of alternate rhyme, tied together by rhyming the last line of the first quatrain with the first line of the second. To this eight-line stanza, which had been used by Chaucer in his Monk's tale, Spenser added an iambic hexameter line (an Alexandrine — an old French verse-form) rhyming with the preceding line, and thus created a stanza whose effect is unique in poetry, and which has been used by many subsequent poets, — among others Thomson, Burns, Scott, Byron, Shelley, and Keats. The rhyme and metre system of this stanza may be briefly symbolized as follows : rhyme, *a-b-a-b-b-c-b-c-c* ; metre, 8 (5 *xa*) + 1 (6 *xa*). On Epic and Allegory, see INTRODUCTION, § **31**, 1, 6.

1–34. From the introductory stanzas of Book II. The poet, addressing Queen Elizabeth, " most mighty sovereign," intimates that, though some may see in his poem nothing but idle fancies, his land of faery is after all only a symbol of the far greater wonders that must lie beyond the bounds of man's knowledge. " There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy." 1. **wote**, know ; *cf. Prologue* (389). Wote is a form of the verb wit, the history of which is extremely interesting (see *Dict.*); study the related words : wise, witch, wicked, witness, wizard, vision, visit, idea, idol, kaleidoscope. 4. **painted**: force of this word? 5. **just**, strictly accurate. 6. **Sith**, since. 9. **vouch**, bring to witness. 10. **advise**, reflect. 22. **witless** : *cf.* note on l. 1. **misween**, distrust.

35–43. Stanza xxiv, Book I, Canto I. To this hermitage Archimago (= hypocrisy) beguiles the hero, the Redcross Knight (= holiness). 38. **wide**, apart. 39. **edified**, built, in the literal sense of the Latin *aedificatus* ; *cf.* edifice, edification (see *Dict.*). 43. **Alway**, always.

44–52. Stanza xli, Book I, Canto I. **46. loft,** roof. **47. sowne,** sound. **51. careless,** without cares.

53–61. Stanza xxxiii. Book I, Canto IX. **53. wight,** person; *cf. Prologue* (71). **55. ypight,** pitched, set. See note on *Prologue* (8).

62–75. Stanzas xiii, xiv, Book I, Canto III. Una (= truth), accompanied by a Lion (= man guided by reason alone, lacking divine revelation; reason is able to recognize truth, and therefore the Lion is Una's attendant), in her wanderings comes across Abessa (superstition, or, perhaps, secret sin). Abessa flees from Una and the Lion, *i.e.* from truth and reason, to the hut of her mother, Corceca (blind devotion). Una, tired, desires entertainment, which is not offered. **62. Page,** the Lion. **64. of,** on account of. **65. faint astonishment,** astonishment causing faintness (transferred epithet). **69. Pater nosters**: the first two words of the Lord's prayer in Latin are *Pater noster*. **70. Aves,** prayers or devotions to the Virgin, beginning with *Ave Maria* (Hail Mary); *cf. Luke* i. 28.

ELIZABETHAN LYRISTS

"The Elizabethan lyric first presented itself to the public in the popular collections called *Miscellanies*. The first printed collection of this kind, *Tottel's Miscellany*, 1557, is usually reckoned the starting-point of the great lyric era. But both the themes of the songs and the mode of publishing had their roots deep-set in the earlier literature. The habit of making manuscript collections of favorite songs for convenience in singing was very common during the early part of the Tudor period, and perhaps earlier" (John Erskine, *The Elizabethan Lyric*, p. 56). The titles of the Elizabethan collections are suggestive of the fascination and spontaneity of the poetry they contained: *Paradise of Dainty Devices* (1576), *Gorgeous Gallery of Gallant Inventions* (1578), *Handful of Pleasant Delights* (1584), *The Phœnix Nest* (1593), *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1599), *England's Helicon* (1600), *Davison's Poetical Rhapsody* (1602). Then, too, there were scores of song-books in which lyrics were set to music. But many of the best songs are to be found in the plays of the period. These incidental songs, to fulfil their purpose of affording pleasurable lyric interludes, had of course to be very singable, simple, short, and, preferably, English and popular in feeling. How well such dramatists as John Lyly, George Peele, and Shakespeare met these requirements may be judged from our selections.

From 1590 to 1600 was the blossom-time of the Elizabethan sonnet. At first sonnets tended to be written in sequences, *i.e.* with a more or less definite, narrative or other, plan. Sir Philip Sidney's *Astrophel* and *Stella* (1591), Spenser's *Amoretti* (1595), and Shakespeare's *Sonnets* (1609) are the chief examples of this tendency. Later, the definite sequence yielded to the loosely arranged collection in which the interrelation of the sonnets was merely ostensible or accidental.

Sir Edward Dyer. My Mind to me a Kingdom Is: set to music in William Byrd's song-book, *Psalmes, Sonnets and Songs of Sadness and*

Pietie (1588). **4. kind,** nature. **13. stay,** support, source of endurance; *cf. Psalms* xviii. 18.

Sir Walter Raleigh. A Vision upon this Conceit of the Faery Queen: sonnet appended to Spenser's *Facrie Queene,* Books I-III, 1590. Milton may have had in mind the first line of this noble poem when he began his sonnet to his wife: "Methought I saw my late espousèd saint." Raleigh states his belief that Spenser's beautiful poem, which he calls a quaint fancy, or "conceit," is superior to the poetry of the great Italian master of romance, Petrarch. He puts his compliment in the form of an allegorical vision: the graces, Love and Virtue, transfer their attendance from the grave of Laura, the lady of Petrarch's inspiration, in whose praise his sonnets were written, to the Faerie Queene; at this "celestial theft" Petrarch weeps and even Homer trembles for his laurels. For the versification see below, under Shakespeare. **2–3. that temple where the vestal flame was wont to burn:** in the temple of Vesta at Rome "a sacred fire, tended by six virgin priestesses called Vestals, was kept religiously aflame." Vesta is the divinity of the hearth, public and private. See *Cl. M.*, p. 35. The Conclusion: verses found in Raleigh's Bible in the gatehouse at Westminster, said to have been written the night before his execution.

Sir Philip Sidney. A Bargain: written about 1580; later revised, but not improved, in sonnet form (1590).

John Lyly. Apelles' Song: from the close of Act III of Lyly's comedy *Alexander and Campaspe* (acted about 1581). Apelles the artist, commissioned by Alexander the Great to paint the portrait of the conqueror's favorite, Campaspe, has fallen in love with the girl. For Cupid and his mother, Venus, and her doves and sparrows see *Cl. M.*, pp. 31–32.

George Peele. Harvestmen A-Singing: from Peele's comedy *The Old Wives [i.e. Wife's] Tale* (acted about 1590).

Robert Greene. Sephestia's Song to her Child: from the pastoral romance, *Menaphon* (1589). **1. wanton,** frolicsome creature (*cf.* wag, l. 3), used as a term of endearment; *cf.* similar use of rogue, rascal. **13. stint,** cease. **15. by course,** in a stream. **28. bliss,** bless.

Christopher Marlowe. The Passionate Shepherd to his Love: first published in *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1599); written before 1593. **2. prove,** make trial of. **4. yields:** singular by poetic license.

William Shakespeare. Sonnets. For the versification see Introduction, §§ **26**; **27.** Most of Shakespeare's sonnets seem to have been produced in 1594. They deal with different themes and are generally of the conventional and affected manner of the day. Genuine emotion occasionally displays itself in the series addressed to a young nobleman, possibly Shakespeare's patron, Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton. Perhaps the three sonnets given in the text were of this series. These sonnets offer no unusual difficulties to the reader: hence it has been thought best to present them without annotation. They have been included in this book

as representative of Shakespeare's non-dramatic poetry; and, as such, may profitably be compared with the sonnets of Milton or of Wordsworth. SONGS. WINTER: from *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act V, Sc. ii (1590). **9. keel**, cool, by skimming or by stirring it round. **11. saw**, maxim, or, better, long story. **14. crabs**, wild apples. WHO IS SILVIA? from *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act IV, Sc. ii (about 1592). UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE: from *As You Like It*, Act II, Sc. v (1599). **36. turn**, fashion, adapt. **43. i' the sun**, out-of-doors. INGRATITUDE: from the same, Act II, Sc. vii. **63. warp**, ruffle in freezing. DIRGE OF LOVE: from *Twelfth Night*, Act II, Sc. iv (about 1601). **70. come away**, come on. **71. cypress**, coffin of cypress wood, or branches of the cypress strewn upon the grave; or, but not likely, crape for the shroud (*cf.* the French *crespe;* see *Dict.* and the note on l. 35 of *Il Penseroso*). **76–77**: Of all who have acted the "part" of death in the drama of life no one has been so true to the rôle as I. AUBADE: from *Cymbeline*, Act II, Sc. iii (1609). The aubade is a morning song. **87. Phœbus**, the sun-god, the sun. **89. chaliced**, cup-shaped. **90. Mary-buds**, marigolds. THE FAIRY LIFE: from *The Tempest*, Act I, Sc. ii (1611). **98. whist**, hushed, silent. **99. featly**, deftly. **100. burthen**, burden, refrain. The burden here is probably the line Bow-wow. A SEA DIRGE: from the same. ARIEL'S SONG: from the same.

THOMAS CAMPION. CHERRY-RIPE (1606). **6. 'Cherry Ripe,'** the street-cry common even at the present time. **8. orient**: this term has a special meaning when applied to pearls; see *Dict.*

BEN JONSON. SONG TO CELIA (written 1605; first published in *The Forest*, 1616). HYMN TO DIANA: from *Cynthia's Revels*, a comedy satirizing the affectations of the court (acted 1600). On Diana (called Cynthia from her birthplace, Mount Cynthus), virgin huntress, goddess of the moon, see *Cl. M.*, pp. 29–31. **21. Hesperus entreats**: the evening star prays for the light of the moon. **23–24**: the shadow of the earth eclipsing the moon. **26. clear**, illuminate. SIMPLEX MUNDITIIS: from the comedy, *The Silent Woman* (1609–1610). The song has no title in the play; the present title is the Latin for 'simple elegance.' **35. Still to be neat**: always to be resplendent (*Lat., nitere*, to shine) or finical in dress. The adjective 'neat' is not used as nowadays for 'tidy.' **44. taketh**, captivates.

FRANCIS BEAUMONT. ON THE TOMBS IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY (written before 1616; published 1653). **5. lie, had realms**: *who* had realms. **7. pulpits**: figuratively for tombs or coffins. **18. once**, once for all.

CAVALIER LYRISTS

ROBERT HERRICK. The two selections are from the *Hesperides* (1648). The poems of that collection were written between 1629 and 1640.

GEORGE HERBERT. VIRTUE: from *The Temple* (1633), a volume of Herbert's devotional verses written between 1630 and 1633. **2. bridal**,

bridal day. See bridal in *Dict.* 5. **angry**, red ; **brave**, showy, splendid. 11. **closes**: in music, the conclusion of a strain or of a musical period or passage.

JAMES SHIRLEY. THE GLORIES OF OUR BLOOD AND STATE : from the masque, or lyrical-dramatic entertainment, *The Contention of Ajax and Ulysses* (1659 ; written about 1640).

EDMUND WALLER. GO, LOVELY ROSE ! (1645). 7. **graces spied** : these syllables have been criticised as lacking euphony and it has been conjectured that Waller may have written 'graces eyed' or 'grace espied.'

WILLIAM HABINGTON. NOX NOCTI INDICAT SCIENTIAM : from the collection of poems addressed to his wife, whom in his verses he called "Castara"; the title of the collection also is *Castara* (1639–1640). The Latin title of this poem is from the Latin version of the Nineteenth Psalm, — the second verse : "Night unto night showeth knowledge." The first verse of the Psalm, "The heavens declare the glory of God ; and the firmament showeth his handiwork," is the theme of this noble poem. 5. **My soul her wings** : *cf. Isaiah* xl. 31. 9. **firmament** : the vault of heaven viewed as something solid and abiding ; *cf.* firm. 15. **character**, sign or letter of the alphabet. 25. **that from the farthest North** : *cf. Jeremiah* i. 14, 15 ; *Daniel* xi. 13–15.

SIR JOHN SUCKLING. WHY SO PALE AND WAN, FOND LOVER ? from the play *Aglaura* (acted 1637). Professor Schelling says that this poem "is the very perfection of the bantering, satirical lyric, in which the age of Charles excelled."

RICHARD LOVELACE. TO LUCASTA (1649). These lines may have more poetry than truth in them, but they are as beautiful as Suckling's flippant verses are clever.

HENRY VAUGHAN. THE RETREAT (1650). This poem should be compared in respect of theme and handling with Wordsworth's *Ode on Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood* (see introduction to notes on that Ode). Wordsworth knew this poem. 2. **angel-**, angelic. 4. **second race** : this life regarded as a second life, succeeding some kind of spiritual existence before birth. 8. **my first love** : *cf.* the capitalized 'His,' l. 10. 24. **train** : retinue or company of spirits in the previous life. 26. **City of palm trees** : where the Israelites wandering in the wilderness found water and comfort, *Exodus* xv. 27 ; *cf.* the righteous that flourish like palm trees "in the courts of our God," *Psalms* xcii. 12–14. 30. **by backward steps would move** : would regain the spirit-world from which I came.

MILTON

L'ALLEGRO AND IL PENSEROSO

These poems were written, probably sometime in 1632, at the beginning of Milton's residence at Horton. They are companion poems, and as such each must be read in the light of the other. *L'Allegro* (the cheerful man)

is here the lover of society and of unreflecting, though innocent, mirth. *Il Penseroso* (the thoughtful man) is the recluse, living, not like *L'Allegro* in the enjoyment of the present, but with an eye toward a larger life in the future. *L'Allegro* is ever ready to indulge in the pleasures of his fellows. *Il Penseroso* is a seeker after that solitude which furnishes opportunity for study and meditation. Each is entirely unable to appreciate, or even to understand, the ideals of the other.

Though each poem, in a way, represents the manner in which a *day* might ideally be spent (in *L'Allegro*, from early morning till midnight, and in *Il Penseroso*, from early evening till the next noon), the poet does much more than this, by making the day in each case representative of the whole life which each character would desire to live. In all probability Milton did not intend either of these poems to picture the true ideal ; but rather designed to suggest through them complementary, though contrasted, aspects of human temperament. Thus the two poems are really not two, but one, " whose theme," as some one has said, " is the praise of the reasonable life."

The metre of the poems is suggestive. In the *Il Penseroso* the lines are, for the most part, smooth, unbroken, iambic tetrameters — well suited to the thoughtful, contemplative poem. The iambic tetrameter of *L'Allegro*, on the other hand, is varied by trochaic effects. These are produced by what is called truncation (see INTRODUCTION, § 20, 4) : the first light syllable of the iambic tetrameter being omitted, so that the rhythm reads like that of trochaic tetrameter, or trochaic tetrameter catalectic (last syllable wanting); these quickly spoken, lively feet suggesting the mood of the more sprightly composition. As illustrative of this, note the lines where each of the two men summons his ideal divinity :

Come, and trip it, as ye go. *L'Alleg.* (33).

Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure. *Il Pens.* (31).

Since these poems are not divided into stanzas, in the following notes a grouping of lines has been made which may serve for stanzaic divisions.

L'ALLEGRO

1-10. Observe and describe the rhyme and metre of these lines, showing how the rough and irregular verse is well suited to the mood of the passage. **1. Melancholy**, here equivalent to an austere and meditative conduct of life. **2. Cerberus.** For this three-headed dog of the underworld, see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 47, 220, 355. **3. Stygian.** For Styx, the river bounding the infernal regions, see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 47. **5. uncouth** (past part. of A.-S. *un* + *cunnan*), hence, originally, not known. But that which was not known was once naturally regarded with distrust or aversion ; hence the secondary meanings, — first, outlandish ; then, ugly or repulsive. Here the poet

evidently has in mind both the radical and the derived meaning. **10. Cimmerian** : see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 176. What attributes of Melancholy does *L'Allegro* imply by the imaginary parentage he ascribes ? the birthplace ? the surroundings ?

11–24. Show the metre and rhyme of this and succeeding divisions as contrasted with the first ten lines. **12. yclept** (from A.-S. *ge*, or *y*, or *i* — in early English frequently a sign of the perfect passive participle + *clipian*, to call) hence, called or named. **Euphrosyne**, one of the Graces : see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 36. **13. heart-easing.** Note the felicity of this compound epithet and of others of the same kind. In his coinage of such words, Milton probably excels all other English poets. Always suggestive and frequently beautiful, they have been termed, not inaptly, " poems in miniature." **14 ; 16. lovely Venus ; ivy-crowned Bacchus** : see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 31–34, 44 ; and show what characteristics such parentage would tend to give to Mirth. **17. sager** : an adjective, but here used with adverbial force. **19. Zephyr with Aurora.** By reference to *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 38, 39, show why Milton preferred this parentage for 'Mirth' rather than the one given above. Probably no English poet has known or understood the Classics better than Milton. Any deviation from the accepted stories or genealogies of Greek mythology must, therefore, be regarded as a conscious alteration for purposes of his own. **24. debonair** (Fr. *de* + *bon* + *aire*), of good bearing or manners.

25–36. Name the companions of Mirth, describe each, and show the attributes which make each good company. **29. Hebe's cheek.** For this goddess of youth, see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 36. **33. trip it.** Here 'it' is a cognate accusative, the meaning of which is derived from the governing verb. **33 34. Come . . . toe.** Note this well-known couplet, now popularly applied to the encouragement of dancing, but invented by the poet of Puritanism. **36. Liberty.** Why is 'Liberty' called a mountain nymph ?

37–40. These four lines are transitional, introducing the rest of the poem. *L'Allegro* now imagines himself spending a day in conformity with his ideals of happiness. See introduction to notes. **40. unreproved pleasures free.** Note the order of the words — very common in Milton : a post-positive adjective modifying the idea expressed in the two words which precede it. **unreproved**, unreprovable, *i.e.* innocent.

41–68. Describe the five definite pictures which together make up this division. **41. To hear.** Show whether this is an infinitive of purpose (or result) modifying 'admit' and coördinate with 'to live' (39), or is in apposition with 'pleasures,' and one of them. **41 ; 42. begin ; startle.** Explain the syntax of these infinitives. **44. dappled dawn.** Describe the picture. **45. to come.** The syntax and consequent meaning of this infinitive offer a puzzle. Does the *lark* come, or *L'Allegro*, or the *dawn?* To whom or what, in each case, would 'good morrow' be bidden ? What, in each case, would be the syntax of 'to come' ? This last question is very important and illustrates something the student will frequently notice, *viz.*, how necessary to

accurate interpretation is a clear understanding of syntactical relations. 45. **in spite of**, not, as usual, notwithstanding ; but rather, in order to spite or defy. 52. **before**, a post-positive preposition. 53–56. **Oft . . . shrill.** Put these four lines into prose order, showing what 'echoing' modifies, and indicating the images the lines possess for eye and ear. 57. **walking.** Give the syntax. **not unseen**, he likes company. Compare this line with *Il Pens.* (65), and show which of the two lines seems to have been modelled on the other. 62. **clouds**, nominative independent before a participle. Compare the Latin ablative absolute. **dight**, arrayed, is now rarely used. 67. **tells his tale**, counts his number (of sheep), the old meaning of 'tale.' What hours of the day have the occurrences of this division occupied ?

69 90. 69-70. **Straight . . . measures.** Note the effect of the trochaic lines and feminine rhymes as marking a sudden transition of thought. 69. **Straight**, straightway. 70. **round**, an adverb. 71. **lawns**, a favorite word with Milton, and often found in other poets. It always means a large, open, grassy stretch of country, — not a cultivated lawn or grass-plot. 75. **pied.** Show whether this modifies 'meadows' or 'daisies.' 78. **bosomed.** Explain. 79. **some beauty lies**, some high-born and beautiful lady dwells. 80. **cynosure** : see *Dict.* for derivation and history, showing how a word that originally meant dog's tail has come to signify centre of attraction. 83. **Corydon and Thyrsis**, common names for shepherds in pastoral poets, such as the Greek Theocritus or the Roman Virgil. Likewise 'Thestylis,' l. 88, and 'Phyllis,' l. 86, are shepherdesses. What shows, as was indicated at the beginning of these notes, that the poet is not endeavoring to depict any single day ? 87. **bower**, as often in Milton, means a dwelling place — here a cottage. 90. **tanned haycock.** Why 'tanned' ?

91–99. 91. **secure** (Lat. *se*, or *sine*, + *cura*), with its radical meaning, without care, care-free. Remember that Milton wrote nearly three hundred years ago, and that we may consequently expect to find many words in their earlier, radical, or primary meaning, rather than their later, derived, or secondary meaning. 94. **jocund.** Observe that this is a transferred epithet. What is really 'jocund' ? **rebeck**, a sort of three-stringed fiddle. 96. **chequered shade.** Why chequered ? 98. **holiday.** What was the original meaning of 'holiday' ? See derivation and history.

100–116. 101. **feat**, in Milton's time pronounced fāte, and rhyming with 'eat' (past tense). 102. **Mab**, the fairy, "no bigger than the agate stone on the fore-finger of an alderman" (as Mercutio says in *Romeo and Juliet*), whose function it was to bring dreams. Milton may have had in mind Ben Jonson's —

> "This is Mab, the mistress Fairy
> That doth nightly rob the dairy,
>
> . . . . . .
>
> She that pinches country wenches
> If they rub not clean their benches."

junkets, a kind of cream cheese. See first couplet above. **103. She**, a country wench, as in second couplet above. **104. he**, the second teller of stories, a shepherd or farm servant, is led by Friar Rush (a house haunter, confused here with Jack o' Lantern or Will o' the Wisp) to a spot where he sees the 'drudging goblin,' Robin Goodfellow, or the Puck of Shakespeare, perform the feats of ll. 105–114. **106. cream-bowl**, 'duly set' out by the farm servants to tempt the sturdy little goblin to do their work for them. **110–112. lubber fiend, stretched, chimney's length, hairy strength** — all seem expressions oddly suited to Robin Goodfellow. Why? **113. crop-full**, stomach-stuffed. **flings.** Observe the headlong haste implied. **114. matin** (a French word, meaning morning), here means morning call, just as the matin-bell called to early prayers. **115. tales** : see note on 'clouds,' l. 62.

117–124. Discuss the following interpretations of this passage: (1) That *L'Allegro* really goes to the city after his rustic companions have retired. (2) That 'then' means not *afterward*, but *on other occasions* or *also*, the visit to the city being actual, but on a different day. (3) That his visit is in imagination and revery, brought about by his readings after his companions have gone to bed. **118. busy hum.** Observe the onomatopœia. **120. weeds**, now used chiefly in the expression "widow's weeds." Thus many words, no longer in common use, are still retained in compounds or special phrases : *cf.* riding-habit, dove-cote, hand-kerchief, etc. **triumphs** (from Lat. *triumphus*, a procession, originally in honor of Bacchus, and later to grace a Roman victory), here some kind of imposing tournament. **122. Rain influence,** in its radical sense (Lat. *in* + *fluere*); give forth, like the stars, a magic control which shapes the destinies of mankind. **122. judge the prize.** This 'influence' or control was such that those upon whom it flowed could not help but win. In this way the prize is judged (or adjudged) by the 'bright eyes.' **123. wit.** The contests seem to be not only physical, such as tourneys, but also intellectual. What, for instance?

125–134. 125–126. Hymen . . . taper clear. The clear taper was supposed to foretell a happy marriage : see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 36, 165. **127. pomp**, etc. The god of marriage, thus portrayed, was no uncommon figure in the masques and pageants of Milton's time. **128. pageantry.** Pageants were originally movable platforms or wagons on which actors performed ; then the word came to refer to the performance on such a platform ; and finally it signified any such elaborate spectacle, wherever produced. **129–130. Such . . . stream.** Note the exquisite thought, imagery, and sound of these lines. They form a bit of rare poetry. **132. Jonson's learned sock.** Discuss the implied comparison between this scholarly writer of dramas and masques, and 'sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child.' **sock.** Look up the *soccus*, or low slipper of the classic comedian, as contrasted with the buskin, or *cothurnus*, of the tragedian. **133. Fancy's child.** Explain. **134. native wood-notes wild.** Name three or four comedies of Shakespeare which this particularly describes.

135–150. Observe the liquid sounds and onomatopoetic effects of which these lines are full. **135. against**, as a protection from. **136. Lydian airs.** The three kinds of Greek music were the serious and majestic Dorian, the bright and sprightly Phrygian, and the soft and voluptuous Lydian. **137. Married to immortal verse**, *i.e.* music and words joined together as in an opera. **138. meeting soul.** Why 'meeting'? **141. wanton heed; giddy cunning.** What does the poet mean by these seeming paradoxes? **142. voice**: see note on l. 62. **143–144. Untwisting . . . harmony.** The harmony in the human soul is assumed to be bound or fettered, except on those rare occasions when some strong stimulus or emotion untwists its fetters and sets it free. **145–150. Orpheus . . . Eurydice.** Review the story in detail: see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 165–168. **147. Elysian**: see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 51, 52. **149. quite.** How nearly did Pluto free Eurydice?

Comment upon the melody of ll. 135–153, noting the sequence of vowel-tones and of consonants (INTRODUCTION, § 21). Indicate the metres of ll. 12, 13, 19–22, 25, 45, 46, 69–72, 131–136.

IL PENSEROSO

See remarks introducing the notes to *L'Allegro*. As in the case of the other poem, a grouping of lines has here been made to serve for stanzaic divisions.

1–10. Make a comparison between these lines and the opening lines of *L'Allegro*, noting metre, rhyme, and contents. **2. brood . . . bred.** They spring from Folly alone, *i.e.* are utterly frivolous. **3. bestéd.** This uncommon verb here means profit, satisfy, or avail. **6. fond** (originally *fonned*, the perfect participle of the A.-S. verb *fonnen*, to be foolish). As late as Shakespeare's time the word was generally used in this radical sense of foolish. Its derived meanings have been (1) foolishly loving; (2) affectionate; (3) loving — the early idea having fully disappeared. **7–8. As thick . . . beams.** How are these foolish fancies like the motes of the sunbeam? **10. fickle pensioners**, a retinue or body-guard which cannot be relied upon by the lord or lady who supports it. Explain the application. **Morpheus.** For peculiarities of the god of dreams see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 54, 177.

11–30. Show the effect of the change in metre. Compare with *L'Alleg.* (11–24). Point out the lines in this passage which have no counterpart in *L'Allegro*. **12. Melancholy**: see note on *L'Alleg.* (1). **13–16. Whose . . . hue.** Just as a light may be so dazzling that the eye is blinded and sees only darkness, so *L'Allegro* has seen nothing but blackness, and accordingly has called her 'loathed,' not realizing that the blackness is his own imperfection. A striking analogy to this thought is the poetic conception of the "music of the spheres," according to which the human ear, oblivious to the divine harmonies, perceives only silence. **17. in esteem**, in the estimation of the observer. **18. Prince Memnon's sister.** For Memnon, king of the Ethio-

pians and friend of the Trojans, see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 179, 307. There are only the vaguest accounts of any sister ; yet Milton creates her as a counterpart of Melancholy. Blackness would ' beseem ' or suit such a beauty as hers. **19–21. starred Ethiop queen . . . offended.** Read the story of Cassiopeia in *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 211–212. According to the usual version, it was the beauty of Cassiopeia's daughter, Andromeda, which was compared with that of the sea nymphs. Both mother and daughter were afterward placed in the sky as constellations ; hence ' starred.' **22. higher,** than who ? **23–30. long of yore, solitary Saturn, Saturn's reign, While yet there was no fear of Jove,** all point back to the " Golden Age " before Jupiter had ascended the throne. See *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 10, 59, 366. Also determine the attributes of Melancholy through the parentage assigned to her. See Saturn (or Cronus, his Greek prototype) and Vesta in *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 5 and 35. **29. woody Ida,** more probably the mountain of Crete than that of Asia Minor.

31–54. Compare with the corresponding passage in *L'Allegro*. Also contrast the rhythm of the two passages. **31. pensive Nun.** Why so called ? **33. grain** (Lat. *granum*), a seed or kernel ; hence a seedlike object, such as the body of the cochineal insect, from which we get a rich purple dye. Thus ' grain ' comes to be used for this red or purple color. **35. cypress** (or cyprus) **lawn,** refers to a kind of fine crape. **36. decent,** used here in its radical sense of comely or becoming : *cf. Des. Vil.* (12). **39. commercing,** holding intercourse or communion with. **40. soul** : see note on *L'Alleg.* (62). **42. Forget . . . marble,** become like a statue in thy rapt thoughtfulness. **46–48. Spare Fast . . . sing.** Milton often repeats this endorsement of " plain living and high thinking," — that only the temperate or abstemious man can ' diet ' (or dine) with the gods ; that he only can receive true poetic inspiration, — ' hear the Muses sing.' Look up the Muses in *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 37. **52–54. Him that yon soars . . . Contemplation.** Professor Masson thus explains this passage : " A daring use of the great vision, in *Ezekiel*, chap. x, of the sapphire throne, the wheels of which were four cherubs, while in the midst of them and underneath the throne was a burning fire. Milton ventures to *name* one of these cherubs who guide the fiery wheelings of the visionary throne."

55–84. Give not only the theme of this division, but also the extent and theme of each of its three subdivisions. Point out the corresponding passage in *L'Allegro*. **55. hist,** now an interjection, but, as used here, an imperative, pure onomatopœia and very expressive. **56. Philomel.** A common poetical term for the nightingale. For her story, see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 249–250. **57. plight.** This may be the present word meaning unfortunate condition ; or, as some think, a strain of music, as being made up of sounds interwoven or plaited. **59. While Cynthia . . . yoke.** The birthplace of Diana was Mt. Cynthus in Delos ; hence her name ' Cynthia.' See *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 29. The ' dragon yoke ' was probably Milton's invention. Dragons were driven by Ceres, Medea, and others, but not by Diana. See

note on *L'Alleg.* (19). **60. accustomed oak.** Is the oak 'accustomed' as respects the bird, the moon, or the poet? **63–64. Thee . . . even-song.** Put these two lines into prose order. **65. unseen**: *cf.* with 'not unseen,' *L'Alleg.* (57), and see note. **68. highest noon**: *i.e.* the zenith. **74. curfew** (Fr. *couvre* + *feu*, coverfire), a bell rung about eight or nine o'clock in the evening, originally as a signal for fires to be extinguished. See Gray's *Elegy* (1). **76. Swinging . . . roar.** Show the effect of the alliteration and the onomatopœia. **78. fit**, suit my mood. **83. bellman's drowsy charm**, the night-watchman used to repeat pious verses to charm evil away from the doors. This was naturally a mere droning formula; hence 'drowsy.'

85–96. 87. out-watch the Bear, stay up later than the constellation of the Great Bear. But in the latitude of England this constellation does not set, disappearing only with the dawn. Thus we may infer the duration of *Il Penseroso's* studies. **88. With thrice great Hermes.** Hermes Trismegistus (*i.e.* Hermes, thrice great), a fabled Egyptian king, was supposed to have lived about the time of Moses. He is probably the same as the mythical Egyptian philosopher Thot, whom the Greeks believed identical with their god Hermes. Several philosophical works of a mystical nature, written during the early centuries of the Christian era, and much studied in mediæval times, were, in a vague way, ascribed to him; and it is these books that *Il Penseroso* delights to spend the night in reading. **88–89. unsphere The spirit of Plato**, *i.e.* call his spirit back from the sphere of the other world through studying his philosophy. *Il Penseroso* wishes to learn from him (1) the truths of immortality which he so early taught, and (2) the doctrine of demonology suggested by him and taught by his followers. These 'demons,' or spirits, were divided into many classes, each having a harmony, or intimate relation ('consent'), with one of the primary elements, — earth, air, fire, and water. **92. mansion** (Lat. *manēre*), in its original sense the place where one remains. **fleshly nook**, *i.e.* the body.

97–102. 98. In sceptered pall come sweeping by, *i.e.* 'sweeping by in imagination,' since he is *reading* these Greek tragedies. **pall** (Lat. *palla*) is the cloak worn by the tragic actor, who would also, in his character of a royal personage, carry a sceptre. **99. Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line**, *i.e.* representing (1) the descendants of the house of Thebes, especially Œdipus and his children (such plays, for example, as the *Seven against Thebes* of Æschylus, and the *Œdipus Tyrannus*, the *Œdipus Coloneus*, and the *Antigone* of Sophocles); and (2) the great-grandson of Pelops, Agamemnon, and his family (such plays as the *Agamemnon* and the *Eumenides* of Æschylus; the *Electra* of Sophocles; and the *Iphigenia in Aulis*, the *Iphigenia in Tauris*, and the *Electra* of Euripides). **100. Or the tale of Troy divine**, *i.e.* tragedies concerning characters who appear in the Trojan war (for example, the *Ajax* and the *Philoctetes* of Sophocles, and the *Andromache* and the *Hecuba* of Euripides). Look up these names in the *Cl. D.* or in the *Cl. M.*, by reference to the index, especially the story of the de-

scendants of Cadmus and of Pelops, *Cl. M.*, pp. 261–267, and pp. 277–281, 313–317. **101. Or . . . age.** Milton is undoubtedly thinking of Shakespeare; perhaps also of Ben Jonson. **102. buskined stage**: the stage trod by actors wearing the buskin or *cothurnus*, "the boot with high heels, designed to add to the stature, and so to the dignity of the tragic actor" (Hales).

103–108. 104. **Musæus**, son of Orpheus, and earliest of Greek poets. For these semi-mythological bards and their adventures, see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 451, 165–168. **107–108. Drew . . . seek**, the same story as suggested in *L'Alleg.* (145–150).

109–120. 109. **him that left half told.** Chaucer, who did not complete his *Canterbury Tales*, left unfinished the *Squire's Tale*, which tells of the adventures of the Tartar king, 'Cambuscan.' According to this story —

> "This noble Kyng, this Tartre, — this Cambynskan
> Hadde two sones by Eltheta his wyf,
> Of which the eldest highte Algersyf,
> That other was i-cleped Camballo;
> A doghter had this worthie King also
> That yongest was, and highte Canace.
> . . . . . .
> Ther cam a Knight up-on a stede of bras,
> And in his hand a brood mirour of glas.
> Upon his thombe he hadde of gold a ring,
> And by his side a naked swerd hanging."

The horse of brass was given to Cambuscan; to the fair Canace was presented the 'ring' and the 'glass,' both 'virtuous,' or magically powerful, since through the one was told the language of every bird that sang, and in the other were revealed the thoughts of all mankind. Chaucer does not give the name of him 'who had Canace to wife,' though Spenser, who continued the poem, has supplied the omission. **113. That**, a relative pronoun referring to Canace. In the English of to-day a non-restrictive relative clause is always introduced by who or which; but not so in Milton's time. **116. great bards beside.** From the three lines that follow, it is clear that the poet has reference to Spenser and his *Faerie Queene*. Among others in his mind were probably Ariosto and Tasso, the Italian poets of chivalry. **120. Where more is meant than meets the ear.** Though this line refers to the allegorical nature of the writings of the 'great bards,' it also furnishes a splendid canon for all true poetry. Explain.

121–130. 121. **Thus . . . career.** Observe how this pentameter line marks a break in the thought. 122. **civil-suited**, the plain garb of the citizen as contrasted with the bright colors of the soldier or courtier. 124. **Attic boy.** Whenever Aurora went to meet her lover Cephalus, she was decked out in her brightest colors. See Aurora and Cephalus in *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 172–175. 125. **kerchieft** (Fr. *couvre* + *chef*, *i.e.* cover for

the head). **128. his.** The neuter possessive had hardly come into use in Milton's time. **130. minute drops,** the drops at the end of the shower, falling at intervals of something like a minute.

131–154. 131; 132. **fling**; **flaring.** Show how these words are particularly apt as indicating the attitude of *Il Penseroso*. 134. **Sylvan.** For this Roman god of the fields and forests, see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 61. **135. monumental,** because a massive memorial of past ages. **136. rude ax . . . heaved stroke.** An interesting transference of epithet, the axe being heaved, and the stroke, rude. **137. nymphs.** Look up the wood nymphs in *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 45. **140. profaner eye.** This wood is *Il Penseroso's* temple, and any intrusion of the merely inquisitive would be a profanation. **145. concert,** similar sounds of nature. Note the onomatopœia of the two or three preceding lines. **146. dewy-feathered.** Explain. For Milton's use of compound epithets, see notes to *L'Alleg.* (13). **147–150. And let . . . laid.** A difficult passage. Put it into prose order before attempting to decipher its meaning. The following suggestions may be helpful. 'Displayed in airy stream' modifies and follows 'dream'; 'laid softly on my eyelids' modifies and follows 'stream of lively portraiture'; 'his' (see note on l. 128) refers to 'sleep' (the dreams, waving at the wings of sleep, thus casting images on the eyelids of the sleeper). **151. breathe.** Supply 'let' from l. 147. **153. good.** What does this modify? **154. genius,** the protecting spirit of the wood.

155–166. 156. **studious cloister's pale,** *i.e.* the precincts or enclosure ('pale') of some institution established for educational purposes and for religious worship. **157. high embowed roof,** the arched roof, possibly of the same cloister. **massy proof,** proof against the mass they must sustain; or, as others think, proof against the weight they must support, on account of their own massiveness. **159. storied windows,** some Bible story being pictured in their stained glass. **dight**: see note on *L'Alleg.* (62). **165–166. Dissolve me . . . mine eyes,** the spiritual exaltation which such a service, amid such surroundings, naturally tends to produce in an emotional and artistic nature.

167–174. These lines have no counterpart in the other poem, for the very essence of *L'Allegro's* philosophy was: Enjoy the present, and let the future take care of itself. **167. weary age.** Note the metonymy. **169. hairy gown,** such as was worn by hermits or monks for penance, or by holy men of old. **170. spell,** *i.e.* study out, slowly, carefully, thoughtfully, the mysteries of earth and of heaven, until finally the inward vision may gain a power like that possessed by the prophets.

175–176. Compare with *L'Alleg.* (151–152).

Comment upon the wedding of sound and sense in ll. 130–138; upon the alliteration and the gradation of vowel sounds in ll. 138–152 and 155–166 (INTRODUCTION, §§ 21, 3; 23, 2). What poetic use is made of sequences of proper names? Which are the most ornate descriptions, and what is the secret of their charm?

LYCIDAS

Edward King, a fellow-student of Milton in Christ's College, was drowned in crossing from England to Ireland during the summer of 1637. King had entered Cambridge when a boy of only fourteen, and had spent eleven years — all of his youth and young manhood — as a well-loved son of his *alma mater*. A fellow of his college at the age of eighteen, a tutor soon afterward, a candidate for the ministry, a verse writer (chiefly in Latin) of at least a college reputation, he had so gained the love of his associates that they were deeply affected by his sudden and untimely death. They resolved, therefore, to issue a little book of verses as a memorial, and asked Milton's aid. This was during the latter part of the poet's residence at Horton, and three years after his last poem, *Comus* (1634). That these three years had been spent in silence was due to a settled purpose, on Milton's part, not to write again till he had arrived at that 'inward ripeness' which should enable him to attain to some such noble art as long afterward found expression in his epics. It is accordingly with no pretended reluctance that he breaks this resolution, and, in November, 1637, contributes this elegy. It is largely in the pastoral vein, and, save for a few digressions, is a lament of a shepherd for his fellow. Hence "Lycidas," a name for a shepherd, frequently used by Theocritus and Virgil, the most famous pastoral poets of classic literature.

1–14. The circumstances under which the poem was written. 1. **once more**, the first time since 1634. 1–2. **laurels, myrtles, ivy**, plants of Apollo and Bacchus, associated in classic thought as symbols of poetry — the materials of the poet's wreath. 3. **harsh and crude**, immature, unripe, not ready to fall naturally. 4. **forced fingers rude**, 'forced' against my real desire, and 'rude,' because in this way only can these unripe berries be plucked. 6. **dear**, the duty is painful, yet tender. 7. **Compels**. Justify the singular verb. 11. **lofty rhyme**, rather extravagant praise. King, though he wrote verses (fairly good ones in Latin), was, after all, no poet. 13. **welter to**. Meaning? 14. **melodious tear**, memorial poem, elegy.

What is the rhyme and metre of this poem as a whole? Point out some lines not of the prevailing metre and see if you can ascertain the poetic value or effect of the deviations. (On Elegy, see INTRODUCTION, § 30, 5.)

15–22. The address to the Muses. 15. **sacred well**. This is generally taken to mean the Muses' birthplace, — the Pierian fount at the foot of Olympus. See *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 505. 18. **coy**, hesitating and unwilling. 19. **Muse**, poet, so called because so inspired. 20. **lucky**, well-omened. **my destined urn**, the urn destined to hold my ashes, when I, like Lycidas, am dead.

23–36. A stanza filled with references to Milton's college life, expressed in the metaphor of the pastoral. In this connection Masson says, "The hill is, of course, Cambridge; the joint feeding of the flocks is companionship in study; the rural ditties are academic iambics and elegiacs; and old Damœ-

tas is probably Dr. Chappell " — the tutor of both King and Milton. In this manner suggest a meaning for ' fountain,' ' shade,' ' rill,' ' high lawns,' etc. 25. **lawns**: see note on *L'Alleg.* (71). 26. **opening eyelids**. Explain the figure. 27. **a-field**. Here ' a ' is a weakened form of the preposition on. 28. **What time**, equivalent to at the time when, thus making ' heard ' (27) intransitive, and explaining l. 28 as an adverbial clause. 28. **gray-fly**. This is the trumpet fly, a species of botfly, which, by the motion of its wings, makes a droning sound, especially in hot or sultry weather. Hence, ' sultry horn.' 29. **with**, at the time of. 30. **the star**, Hesperus, the name given to Venus when it appears as the evening star. 31. **Toward . . . wheel.** What time of night would this be? 33. **oaten flute**, the reed pipe or flute of the shepherd; but what does it stand for here? 34. **Satyrs and Fauns**: see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 46, 61. To what do they here refer? 36. **Damœtas**, a common name in classic pastoral. See Masson's note above.

37–49. Contrast the happiness of active life in the last stanza with the heavy sadness of this. 40. **gadding vine**. Explain the adjective. 44. **joyous leaves**. Why ' joyous '? 45. **canker**, the cankerworm. 46. **taint-worm**, a small red spider. 47. **gay wardrobe**. Why ' gay wardrobe '? 48. **white-thorn**, the hawthorn.

50–63. Except for local names and color, this passage is a close imitation of the first idyl of Theocritus and of the tenth eclogue of Virgil. 50. **Nymphs**. Were these *wood nymphs* (*Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 45) or *Muses* (*Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 37)? 52. **the steep**, some mountain in Wales, where the Druids are supposed to be buried. 54. **Mona**, the Roman name of Anglesey, a steep, high, and thickly wooded island off the coast of Wales. Why ' shaggy '? 55. **Deva**, the river Dee, between England and Wales. Chester, the port from which King sailed (see Milton's argument at head of poem), is on this river. **wizard stream**. The river was supposed to possess supernatural qualities. 56. **Ay me ! I fondly dream**. What makes this line so effective? **fondly**, in its primary meaning, foolishly. Notice that the object of ' dream ' is the interrupted speech in the following line. 58–63. **What . . . shore**. He shows that the ' Nymphs ' could have done nothing, had they ' been there,' by recalling the powerlessness of Calliope, chief of the Muses (*Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 112, 165), to save her own son Orpheus from his terrible death. Read the story of this death in *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 167–168. 58. **Orpheus**. Give the syntax. 61. **rout**. Who composed this ' rout,' and why did they make a ' roar '? 63. **Lesbian shore**, to which, according to the story, the head of the bard at last floated.

64 84. The first digression of the poem. Does it pay, the poet asks, to strive after and attain poetic ideals, when the applause of the world is not for such effort, but rather for the superficial and trivial? Lines 65–66 refer to the true poet, but ll. 68–69 have reference to the more popular, second-rate lyric writers of the day. It is but fair to add that some critics believe that Milton is making a contrast, not between two kinds of poets, but between a

life of poetic effort and one of mere pleasure. **67. use**, are accustomed to do. **68–69. Amaryllis and Neæra**, shepherdesses of the classic pastoral, the dalliance with whom typifies a life, frivolous, self-indulgent, uninspired by ideals. **70. Fame . . . spur.** In what sense is fame a 'spur'? **71. last infirmity.** After all other infirmities have been conquered by the 'noble minds,' a love of fame still survives. **73–76. But . . . life.** Explain. Note that Fate, Atropos (*Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 38), is so merciless in this act as to seem a 'Fury.' But why 'blind'? **76–84. But . . . meed.** Apollo, god of song and of the true poet, here speaks. **76. praise.** Give the syntax. **77. trembling**, a participle, modifying the substantive idea in the possessive 'my,' *i.e.* the ears of me trembling. **79. glistering foil**, a plate of shining metal placed under a jewel to increase its brightness. Explain the metaphor as applied to fame. **81. by**, here a very important word. What relation does it express?

85–102. Neptune sends his herald, Triton, to ascertain where lies the responsibility for Lycidas's death. But first the poet acknowledges to the spirit of the pastoral that, in listening to the voice of Phœbus, he has for the moment put aside the 'oat,' or pastoral pipe. The address to 'Arethuse' (*Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 117–120), a river of Ortygia, an island off Sicily, suggests the Greek writer of pastorals,—Theocritus of Sicily; while 'Mincius,' a stream of northern Italy, calls up the image of Virgil, who lived upon its banks. **87. higher mood**, than the pastoral can express. **90. plea.** Explain. **91. felon.** Why 'felon winds'? **93. of rugged wings**, a descriptive phrase. Why 'rugged'? **96. Hippotades.** Note the Greek patronymic for Æolus, king of the winds (son of Hippotas): see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 39, 481. **99. Panope**, one of the fifty Nereids: see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 55. **101. Built in th' eclipse**, etc., and hence ill-omened.

103–107. Really a separate stanza, although not so printed in the original. **103. Camus**, the presiding deity of the river Cam, and hence representing Cambridge [with *Cam*+*bridge*, compare *Ox* (or *Usk*, a river) + *ford*]. The Cam is a sluggish river filled with river weeds and sedges. **104. mantle, bonnet**: see note on *L'Alleg.* (62). **105. figures dim**, markings on the sedge leaf. **106. sanguine**, in its radical sense (from Lat. *sanguis*, blood). **flower**, the hyacinth. For the story of Hyacinthus, and the markings on the flower named after him, see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 93–94. **woe**, the Greek word αἴ (alas), inscribed upon the petals of the hyacinth, and expressing the sorrow of Phœbus. **107. pledge**, sometimes, as here, means offspring, or child, since children were once often given as hostages or pledges. See the introduction to these notes for King's close association with his university.

108–131. This second digression is a very remarkable passage. The young poet, with intense scorn, denounces the corruption of the Church and clergy of his day, and foreshadows the spirit of the Milton who, a few years later, was to aid the Puritan rebellion with his stern, controversial prose. **109. pilot . . . lake**: see *Matthew* iv. 18. **110. massy** (massive) **keys**, carried by St. Peter as a symbol of his function: see *Matthew* xvi. 19.

114. Enow, enough. **bellies' sake**, material welfare. **115. Creep, intrude, climb.** Discriminate between these three ways of invading the ministry. For a very full and careful explanation of this whole passage, see Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies*, toward the end of the first third of the essay. **117. scramble . . . feast**, press forward to the allotment of church endowments. What is meant by 'the worthy bidden guest'? **119. Blind mouths.** As Ruskin points out, this striking metaphor indicates the very antithesis of a true clergyman. These men are 'blind,' and are 'mouths' open for the feeding; whereas they should be spiritual overseers — bishops, and feeders of their flocks — pastors. Look up the derivation of bishop and of pastor. **119–120. that . . . sheep-hook.** What does the clause modify? **122. What . . . sped.** Explain each of these three sentences. **123. lean and flashy songs**, unsatisfying and insipid sermons. What is the syntax of 'songs'? **124. scrannel**, thin. **125. hungry**, for what? **126. wind and rank mist they draw** (draw in, inhale), the vapid and unsound teachings. **127. Rot . . . spread.** What does this mean? **128. grim wolf.** By the 'wolf,' Milton undoubtedly meant the Church of Rome, which was every day gaining new converts from the 'sheepfold' of the English Church, with no one to object; for the English archbishop, Laud, is said to have leaned toward Catholicism. **130. two-handed engine**, perhaps more discussed than any other expression in Milton's works. 'Engine' in his time was used as in our phrase "engine of death." Accordingly, it has been taken to mean an axe (see *Matthew* iii. 10), a sword (see *Revelation* i. 16), the two houses of Parliament (the word 'engine' was sometimes used in Milton's time to mean Parliament), the Old and the New Testament, and various other things. The meaning in general is, however, plain, that the time of final retribution is at hand.

132–151. Though not set off in the original text, these lines really form the next stanzaic division. **132–133. Return . . . streams**, another acknowledgment of a digression from the true pastoral: *cf.* ll. 85–87. **Alpheus**, poetically connected with Arethusa: see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 117–120. For this and **Sicilian Muse**, see note on ll. 85–102. **dread voice.** Whose was the voice that had shrunk his streams, and what does the latter phrase mean? **136. use**, obsolete in this sense, *viz.*, to have one's dwelling place. **137. Of shades**, etc., modifies 'whispers.' **138. swart star**, the Dog Star which makes vegetation brown or swarthy. Explain connection here. **139. quaint enamelled eyes.** Justify the adjectives. **140. honeyed showers.** Why 'honeyed'? **142–150. Bring . . . tears.** In this passage notice the aptness of Milton's adjectives. **142. rathe**, an old positive, of which rather (originally meaning earlier) was the comparative. **151. laureate hearse.** "The hearse was a platform, decorated with black hangings, and containing an effigy of the deceased. Laudatory verses ('laureate') were attached to it with pins, wax, or paste" (Jerram, quoting from Stanley). Look up the derivation and history of 'hearse,' showing its growth from a harrow to a carriage for the dead.

152–164. **156. Hebrides** : islands off the west coast of Scotland. **158. monstrous world**, world of monsters. **159. moist vows**, tears and prayers. **160. fable of Bellerus old**, the land where a Cornish giant, Bellerus, was fabled to have lived. Milton seems to have coined this name from Bellerium, the Latin word for Land's End, Cornwall. **161. great vision of the guarded mount.** Tradition reports that the archangel Michael was once seen sitting on and guarding a Cornish mountain. Here he is represented with his face turned toward the strongholds of Namancos and Bayona, situated in northwestern Spain, opposite Land's End. The poet begs the archangel to withdraw his eyes from Spain and fix them upon the watery grave of Lycidas. **164. dolphins.** For their sympathy with a poet, see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 454.

165–185. A burst of triumph, as the poet realizes that, after all, the grave has no real sting. Like the 'day star,' or sun, which seems to sink into the ocean, this sinking is only to be followed by a glorious resurrection. **165. shepherds.** Who is meant? **166. your sorrow.** Explain. **170. new-spangled ore.** Explain this with reference to the sun. **173. might of Him**, etc.: see *Matthew* xiv. 25. **174–175. Where . . . laves.** Put into prose order, noting that the clause modifies mounted. **175. nectar pure.** Why with 'nectar'? **176. unexpressive** (inexpressible) **nuptial song** : see *Revelation* xix. 6–9. **177. kingdoms meek.** Explain the adjective. **181. wipe the tears.** *Isaiah* xxv. 8 ; *Revelation* vii. 7. **183. Genius of the shore.** According to an ancient belief the spirit of any one who was drowned would thereafter guard the place of his death as a protecting 'genius.' Note here and throughout the poem the freedom with which Milton turns from Christian to pagan imagery.

186–193. Observe the calm repose of these last lines — the same placidity that often marks the close of a stirring epic. **186. uncouth.** What is the meaning here? See *L'Alleg.* (5) and note. Who is this 'uncouth swain'? **186–191. Thus . . . bay.** He had been singing this pastoral song all day. **188. quills**, reeds, or oaten pipes of the shepherd. Their stops are the vent-holes over which the fingers of the musician play. But why 'tender'? **189. Doric.** Doric was the rural dialect used by Theocritus and other Greek writers of pastoral poetry. **190. stretched out all the hills.** Explain this line. **192. twitched.** We can imagine the shepherd drawing his blue mantle around him as he feels the sudden chill of evening. **193. To-morrow . . . new.** What meaning may this line have in reference to Milton's life? Indicate best lines in this poem. (See INTRODUCTION, § 34.)

Comment upon the metre and the tone-qualities of ll. 1–14 ; upon the poetic figures of ll. 103–131, and upon the charms of sound-sequence in the stanza of ll. 186–193. (See INTRODUCTION, §§ 8 ; 18 ; 20, 3 ; 21.)

PARADISE LOST

The Cavalier versifier, Edmund Waller, said of his contemporary, the great Puritan poet : " The old blind poet hath published a tedious poem on

the Fall of Man. If its length be not considered a merit, it hath no other." To-day — in spite of its theme, which repels such smug moderns as have neither historic sense nor reverence for the symbols of sacred tradition and the imaginative lore of the ages ; in spite of its idea of the relation of God to man, which no longer satisfies us ; in spite of its occasional and tiresome theological arguments, which are antiquated — we regard *Paradise Lost* as one of the greatest poems of all time, and rank its author with the supreme epic poets, Homer, Virgil, and Dante. But to appreciate the poem the reader must bring something to the reading, his eye must bring something to the seeing. A recent critic, Professor Dixon, writes : " Bring nothing to Milton and you take nothing from him. Bring to him some knowledge of classical poetry, some imaginative faculty, above all bring to him that rare gift, an ear not for the jingles but for the subtler harmonies of verse, and you share the transport of Landor — ' After I have been reading *Paradise Lost* I can take up no other poet with satisfaction. I seem to have left the music of Handel for the music of the streets, or at best for drums and fifes . . . . Averse as I am to everything relating to theology, and especially the view of it thrown open by this poem, I recur to it incessantly as the noblest specimen in the world of eloquence, harmony, and genius.' "

The abiding glory of the poem is indeed its diction, its imagery, and, above all, its music. In diction it is always noble and elevated, never mean or commonplace, seldom fantastic. The greatness and flawless purity of Milton's phrases, even the most colorful and sonorous of them, may easily be appreciated if one reads aloud passages from *Paradise Lost* and then in succession passages from other poems in this volume. The stately splendor of his style is much assisted by words of Latin derivation, as is pointed out in the notes below. In imagery Milton inclines always to the sublime, though of the simple beauties of field and hedgerow he makes vivid, accurate, and delicate use. But the procession of images in his epics is from the earth to the sun and through the vast reaches of the starry firmament.

To his superb music another marvellous master of English rhythm, Tennyson, has alluded as follows:

> "O mighty-mouthed inventor of harmonies,
> O skilled to sing of Time or Eternity,
> God-gifted organ-voice of England,
> Milton, a name to resound for ages;
> Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel,
> Starred from Jehovah's gorgeous armories,
> Tower, as the deep-domed empyrean
> Rings to the roar of an angel onset!"

By way of contrast, Tennyson speaks of his own verse as " the brooks of Eden mazily murmuring." Wordsworth, also, has paid tribute to Milton's lyre. In a sonnet, which is printed elsewhere in this book, he says :

> "Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart:
> Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea."

Lowell compares the greater lines of *Paradise Lost* to the "multitudinous roll of thunder" and William Watson has the phrase, "Milton's keen, translunar music." To discover how these great effects are produced — how they depend in part upon vowel and consonant sequences, open and closed syllables, quantity, and assonance, constant variation in the position of the cæsural pause, and masterly deviation from the metrical norm of five iambic feet to the line — may prove interesting if the analysis is made a living part of one's pleasure in the music of the verse and if it is extended by way of experiment and comparison to the poems of other authors in this volume. (For the epic metre, blank verse, see INTRODUCTION, § 19; for the cæsura, § 20, 2; for the Epic, § 31, 1.)

Ever since his thirty-first year, after his return from Italy in 1639, Milton had planned to write a great poem which posterity should not willingly let die. He profoundly believed that he was destined to write such a poem and he definitely set about to prepare himself for the high task. "I was confirmed in this opinion, that he who would not be frustrate of his hope to write well hereafter in laudable things, ought himself to be a true poem; that is, a composition and pattern of the best and honorablest things." He asserted that such a work was "not to be raised from the heat of youth or the vapors of wine, like that which flows at waste from the pen of some vulgar amorist, or the trencher-fury of a riming parasite [note his compliment to the Cavalier poets!] nor to be obtained by the invocation of Dame Memory and her Siren daughters, but by devout prayer to that eternal Spirit who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his Seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases. To this must be added industriously select reading, steady observation, insight into all seemly and generous arts and affairs." As a part of this preparation he reviewed many subjects for the poem — about one hundred in all; for a time he had thought of writing on British history, especially King Arthur. His plans were interrupted by the Civil War and the long and arduous services he rendered to his party in the conflict. But he never forgot his supreme ambition. At last, in 1658, nearly twenty years after he had conceived the purpose, when he was fifty years old and after he had been blind for five or six years, he resumed work on his heart's desire, and completed the poem in 1663 or 1665. It was published in 1667.

Of the subject and general plan of the epic, of its plot and the division of the action into twelve books, there is not room here to speak adequately. Suffice it to say that the subject is "Man's first disobedience" of God's command and the consequent expulsion from Eden; that the underlying motive of the story is to "assert Eternal Providence and justify the ways of God to men." With the central plot of the sin and punishment of Adam and Eve two separate strands of event are intricately interwoven, the one antecedent in time, the other subsequent. They are the rebellion of Satan and his followers, and Christ's redemption of man from sin with the foiling

thereby of Satan's scheme for revenge. Both of these stories are narrated to Adam, the former, as history, by Raphael, the latter, as prophecy, by Michael. By this device of a narrative within a narrative (copied from Virgil and Homer) a greater unity and a smaller duration of time are secured to the action of the poem. — In the first Book, from which our selections have been made, after an invocation of the muse that inspired Moses and a statement of the subject and purpose of the poem (ll. 1–26), the early stages of Satan's rebellion are concisely outlined (ll. 27–49 ; later narrated in detail by Raphael, Book VI) ; and from a point well toward the end of Book I the story of Satan is told at length : how, cast down from Heaven upon the lake of eternal fire, he and his followers planned in revenge to betray God's latest creature, Man, and to set up a dominion of wickedness. This story is carried through the second Book. Adam and Eve are first introduced in Book IV, ll. 288–311.

The characters of the poem are not all drawn with equal success. There are only two human beings in the 10,565 lines of the work, and they are only half-human. Adam and Eve are so formal, philosophical, and 'dissertatious' that they can hardly be told apart. Adam expects colorless obedience, subserviency, from his wife, and he gets it. Milton's God, whom Eve calls "our Great Forbidder," also demands obedience, rather than love ; he is eternal, omnipotent, stern, even harsh, and quite unsympathetic. The qualities of love, compassion, and mercy are given to the Son rather than to the Father. The great character is Satan. "The ruined archangel is the most tremendous conception in the compass of poetry ; no longer the petty mischief-maker, the horned enchanter, of the middle-age, but a giant and a hero, whose eyes are like eclipsed suns, whose cheeks are thunder-scarred, whose wings are as two black forests ; armed with a shield whose circumference is the orb of the moon, with a spear in comparison with which the tallest pine were but a wand ; doubly armed by pride, fury, and despair ; brave and faithful to his troops, touched with pity for his innocent victims, pleading necessity for his design, actuated less by pure malice than by ambition and resentment." Inevitably Satan is the hero of the poem.

1–26. Invocation, Subject, Purpose. **2. tree** : see *Genesis* ii. 9, 17, and chap. iii, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. *Genesis* iii. 22–24 shows that it was not the tree of life. **mortal**, deadly, bringing death. Note the tautology in the next line. But if Milton means taste *by a mortal*, there is no repetition of thought. **4. Eden** : perhaps the Hebrew word meaning 'delight' ; possibly a geographical term. Milton uses Paradise and Eden interchangeably, as is usual except in the Bible itself. See 'Paradise' in *Biblical Dict.* **one greater Man**, the Christ ; *cf. Romans* v. 19. **6–10. Heavenly Muse . . . Chaos** : referring to God's appearance to the shepherd Moses, on Sinai, also called Horeb, and attributing to Moses the inspired composition of the story of creation, in *Genesis* i. See *Exodus* iii., xix. **10. Sion**, Zion, a hill of Jerusalem, identified by some Biblical passages

as the mount on which the Temple stood, the dwelling place of God. **11. Siloa.** The pool of Siloam, to the southeast of the Upper City of Jerusalem, below Zion, was fed by a stream from the Gihon, or Virgin's Fountain, a little way to the north ; *cf. Isaiah* viii. 6, and see *Biblical Dict.* **12. Fast,** close. **oracle of God,** the Temple. **14. middle,** interpreted as mean, mediocre ; also as through the middle air, in contrast to the ether above. The latter is the preferable interpretation ; it is supported by a similar use of ' middle ' in l. 516. **15. Aonian mount** : Helicon, the Muses' mountain, in Bœotia ; see *Cl. M.*, p. 96. **pursues,** treats of. **17–22,** the spirit of God mentioned in *Genesis* i. 2 ; the word in that verse which is translated ' moved ' (" the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters ") signifies ' brooding upon,' as of a bird, — hence the figure in l. 21. **25. assert,** vindicate. **Providence**: the care and guardianship of God over His creatures ; God supplements His omnipotence with His providence.

44–71. Milton begins in the middle of the story ; so also do Homer and Virgil. Why ? *Cf.* introduction to these notes. **45–48.** For the belief in the fall of the angels from Heaven see *Luke* x. 17–18 ; *II Peter* ii. 4 ; *Jude* vi ; for the war in Heaven, *Isaiah* xiv. 4–23 ; *Revelation* xii. 1–9 (" each furnishes details, but neither refers to such a war as Milton had in mind "). **45.** Note the superb energy of the line and the picture. **ethereal.** See note on l. 14, above. **46. ruin,** in the radical sense of a violent fall (Latin *ruere*, to rush down). **56. baleful,** boding evil. See *Dict.* **58. obdurate.** Accent on second syllable, where it originally, and properly, fell. **59. ken** : intransitive, to look around, *i.e.* as far as angels are able to see. — Note, as typical, the constant shifting of the cæsural pause in the following ten lines : thus, to use Milton's own words, the sense " is variously drawn out from one verse to another." By this expression he also refers to the musical effect of run-on lines. What is his practice in this respect ? What effect would rhymes give to Milton's verse ? In a prefatory note to *Paradise Lost*, the poet maintained that rhyme " is no necessary adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verse, in longer works especially, but [is] the invention of a barbarous age, to set off wretched matter and lame metre." What is your criticism of this dictum ? Illustrate by other poems in this volume. **68. urges.** In the radical sense of drives, presses on. **71 ff. Beëlzebub,** a god of the Philistines ; Milton uses the name for Satan's chief lieutenant.

192–263. **197–200** : for the Titans and the earth-born Giants, for **Typhon** and **Briareos**, see *Cl. M.*, pp. 4–8, 354. **201. Leviathan** : a mythological monster ; see *Psalms* lxxiv. 14 ; *Isaiah* xxvii. 1 ; in *Job* xli. the term is applied to the crocodile. **202** : note the anapæst. **226. incumbent,** lying. **244. change,** exchange. **257. all but,** only.

283–313. In this section consider the effect of the many words of Latin derivation ; *cf.* below, ll. 622 ff., and above, 45 ff. **288. optic glass,** telescope. **Tuscan,** adjective, from Tuscany, a division of Italy, in which is included Florence. The telescope had been developed by the Florentine,

Galileo, who is here called the Tuscan artist. Milton had seen him in Italy. **289, 290. Fesole, Valdarno**, near Florence. **294. ammiral**, admiral ; here used for the ship which carries the admiral, *i.e.* the biggest ship. **296. marle**, soft, clayey soil. **298.** How does this line vary from the prosodical norm ? What other lines in this section contain variations ? What is the effect of the changes in each case ? Milton nearly always has five accents to the line, but he makes use of many substitutions : trochees, spondees, pyrrhics, anapæsts, dactyls, amphibrachs, and tribrachs. **303. Vallombrosa**, near Florence. **Etruria**, the ancient name for Tuscany. Note in this section Milton's use of mellifluous and romantic proper names to heighten the effect of his descriptions ; *cf.* below, ll. 577–587, 717–721. **305. Orion** : storms were supposed to accompany the rising and setting of the constellation Orion ; see *Cl. M.*, pp. 170, 122–123. **307. Busiris** : a mythical king of Egypt. Milton, following other writers, gives this name to the Pharaoh who was drowned in the Red Sea. See *Exodus* xiv. **Memphian**, from Memphis, a famous city of ancient Egypt ; here = Egyptian. **309. Goshen**: the district in Lower Egypt occupied by the Israelites before the Exodus.

567–604. 568. traverse, across. **572. his.** Probably for *its*. "Milton uses *its* but three times (see l. 254, above); the word was just coming into use, but was wholly avoided in King James's Bible, and occurs very rarely in Shakespeare." **573. since created man**, since man was created. **575. small infantry** : the Pygmies, against whom the cranes made war. See *Iliad*, iii, 5 and *Cl. M.*, p. 519. **577. Phlegra** : a peninsula in Macedonia, where the Giants were defeated by the Gods ; the spot had probably been volcanic at an early period. See *Cl. M.*, p. 7 ; *cf.* ll. 197–200, above. **578. Thebes and Ilium** : referring to the two greatest wars of Greek tradition ; see *Cl. M.*, pp. 265–268, 277–317. **580. Uther's son**, King Arthur. **581. Armoric**, Breton. **583–586** : the references are to sites of battles celebrated in medieval romance. **588. observed**, obeyed. **589–604** : consider this majestic portrayal of Satan and add to it from other lines in the selection. What is Milton's method of description ? of characterization ? Why did Milton lavish all this dusky splendor upon Satan ? **592. her**, its. *Cf.* note on l. 572 ; for similar use of the feminine pronoun see *Psalms* cxxxvii. 5. **597. disastrous** : the eclipse of the sun was superstitiously regarded as threatening disaster. **603. considerate**, considering, plotting.

622–669. 624. event, outcome. **636. counsels different**, contrary, divided counsels. **644. provoke**, call forth ; see *Dict.* **646. work** : used as transitive verb, — 'to accomplish.' **647. no less.** That he may discover it no less than (as well as) we have. **659. cover** : object of this verb ? **662. understood**, carried on by secret understanding. — What passions are evident in Satan's speech ? Do they render him ignoble ? Could God's adversary be painted as utterly ignoble ?

710–798. Pandemonium : (*pan*, all + demon), the place of all demons ; the term was invented by Milton as a proper name, but has come to be used as a general term for any disorderly and noisy place or assemblage, or for

a loud, confused noise. **710–716** : see *Dict.* for the architectural terms. **718. Alcairo**, Cairo. **720. Belus** : the Assyrian god Baal. **Serapis** : an Egyptian divinity. **724. folds.** In the radical sense of the leaves or folds of a door. **728. cresset**, a cup of incombustible material, for holding blazing matter to afford light. **797. frequent**, crowded ; *cf.* the Latin original. **798. consult**, consultation.

Book II. **1–9.** 1. The line opens with a trochee instead of an iamb ; what is the effect of this variation ? 2. **Ormus** : an ancient and medieval city of Persia, once noted for its wealth.

SONNETS

For general remarks on the sonnet as a verse form, see the Introduction to this book, §§ **26**; **30**, 6; also the account of the sixteenth-century pre-Elizabethan era ; also the notes on Wordsworth's Sonnets. Milton wrote in all twenty-three sonnets, five in Italian and eighteen in English. Of his English sonnets the first two were written near the end of his college life, in about his twenty-third year ; the other sixteen, composed between 1642 and 1658, were the only poems he wrote during the long twenty-year period of his fierce political strife in behalf of the commonwealth. Of all his poems, these sonnets are the most intensely personal.

Though the sonnet is a form of verse derived from the Italian, the early English sonneteers, including Shakespeare himself, did not pretend to follow the Italian form. Milton observes the pause between octave and sestet, usual in the strict Italian form, in only seven of his eighteen English sonnets. Another important rule of the Italian sonnet, *viz.*, that the last two lines must not rhyme, he breaks in only one instance. He follows closely the most common Italian rhyme systems of the sestet, *c-d c-d c-d* and *c-d-e c-d-e*, having in his eighteen English sonnets seven of the former and five of the latter system. The poet himself constantly refers to his sonnets as poems in the " Petrarchian stanza."

Sonnet II

Milton took his master's degree at Cambridge, and severed his connection with the University in July, 1632. There has been found among his manuscripts a letter to some unknown friend, undated, but probably written not long after his graduation, in which he replies at some length to the charge that he was wasting his time in aimless study, when he should be devoting himself to the Church or engaging in some other active pursuit. After stating decisively that he has given over all idea of entering the ministry, he concludes, " Yet, that you may see that I am something suspicious of myself, and do take notice of a certain belatedness in me, I am the bolder to send you some of my nightward thoughts some while since, because they come in not altogether unfitly, made up in a Petrarchian stanza which I told you of." The " Petrarchian stanza," or sonnet, which thereupon follows, has

been since entitled, *On His Having Arrived at the Age of Twenty-three*. As its title indicates, the sonnet was written on or about the poet's twenty-third birthday, *i.e.* December, 1631.

1. **subtle thief.** Why is 'time' called a 'subtle thief'? 5. **semblance.** Milton's delicate youthful beauty was such that he was nicknamed "the Lady of Christ's College." 7. **And . . . appear.** This line is probably coördinate with the preceding line, both lines being in apposition with 'truth.' Owing to my youthful appearance, people do not realize that I am so old, or that I am so tardy in development. 8. **timely-happy spirits endu'th,** *i.e.* that endows (modern form of endue) men more fortunate as regards early maturity. 9. **it,** inward ripeness. 10 **still,** ever. **even,** in proportion to, conforming itself. 13. **All is.** Does this mean, Everything is now thus proportioned; or, All that concerns me is whether, etc.; or is there some other interpretation?

Sonnet XVI

Though this sonnet was written in 1652, owing to the nature of some of its lines it was not printed until 1694, when allusions to pre-restoration politics were more tolerantly received than during the post-restoration period of Milton's life. Certain of the independent ministry had petitioned a parliamentary committee for state support of the clergy and for other special privileges. Milton saw clearly that this would be only a first step toward the overthrow of religious liberty; and, as Masson points out, the sonnet "is a call to Cromwell to save England from a mercenary ministry of any denomination, or a new ecclesiastical tyranny of any form."

1–4. Put into prose order. Cromwell had to make his way not only against the enemy in the field, but also against detractors in his own party. 5. **neck of crowned Fortune proud.** "This is an unmistakable allusion to Charles I, expressed in Biblical language. *Cf. Genesis* xlix. 8" (Bell). Whether or not this is true, the downfall of the Royalist cause is at least referred to. 7. **Darwen stream,** where Cromwell routed the Scots in 1648. 8. **Dunbar field,** where the Scots, in 1650, were again defeated by the Protector. 9. **Worcester's laureate wreath.** In the battle of Worcester, 1651, just one year after Dunbar, the Scots were finally overthrown. Hence the laureate, or laurel, a wreath, crowning Cromwell's final victory. 11. **new foes,** *i.e.* such foes as the independent clergy mentioned above, who were scheming for the establishment of a state Church, and were thus inimical to religious freedom. 13–14. **Help . . . maw.** With these lines *cf. Lyc.* (113–118).

Sonnet XXI

Milton became totally blind in 1652. Though it would seem probable that this, his first reference in poetry to his affliction, was written not long after that date, there are reasons for placing it as late as 1655. In Masson's

judgment it may have been written any time between these two dates. The title *On His Blindness* has been added since Milton's time.

2. **Ere half my days.** Just one-third of Milton's 'days' were spent in blindness. 3. **And that one talent.** Supply 'how' from l. 1, making the clause the object of 'consider.' Look up the parable of the talents in *Matthew* xxv. 14–30, and show how Milton is applying the story to himself. 6. **lest He returning chide,** still a reference to the parable. 7. **light**: see note on *L'Alleg.* (62). 8. **fondly,** foolishly. 12. **thousands,** *i.e.* of heavenly messengers, or angels.

DRYDEN

ALEXANDER'S FEAST

St. Cecilia, a patron saint of music, is supposed to have lived at the beginning of the third century, having suffered martyrdom about 220 A.D. According to the legends which have sprung up about her, she was virtuous, devout, beloved of the angels, inspired by and inspirer of music. At some time and in some way — just when or how is uncertain — she had grown to be regarded as music's patron saint, and hence, during a part of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, one day of each year was set aside by musicians and music lovers to do homage to her memory. How the tradition arose that St. Cecilia invented the organ is a matter of conjecture, as are also the actual facts concerning its invention. The legend of St. Cecilia was first told in English by Chaucer in his Second Nun's Tale.

Alexander's Feast, probably the finest of all the odes written for the St. Cecilia festivals, was composed in 1697, the poet being then in his sixty-eighth year. Lord Bolingbroke (the lifelong friend of Pope, and the "Mr. St. John" of Thackeray's *Henry Esmond*) has recorded a remark made to him by Dryden: "I have been up all night. My musical friends made me promise to write them an ode for their Feast of St. Cecilia, and I was so struck with the subject which occurred to me that I could not leave it till I had completed it. Here it is, finished at one sitting." Although the poet afterward spent a week or two in revising this first draft, it is probable that it was not altered to any considerable extent. Dryden himself was much pleased with his effort, and is reported to have boasted that "a finer ode had never yet been written and never would be." His earlier poem on the same subject, *A Song for St. Cecilia's Day* (1687), was also a noteworthy production, although much shorter and less ambitious than *Alexander's Feast*.

The most characteristic quality of this poem is found in its onomatopoetic effects both in word-sounds and in metre. It has been said of Dryden that metre, far from being a hindrance to him, was a source of positive freedom; and nowhere is this exemplified better than in *Alexander's Feast*. While reading the poem, the student should note, for each stanza, three things: (1) the kind of music Timotheus is playing; (2) the effect of the music on Alexander; and (3) the way in which the poet, by word-sounds and metrical

effects, pictures *objectively* the sound of the music, and *subjectively* and more subtly the resulting mood of the great conqueror. See INTRODUCTION, § 21, for the sound-qualities of verse, and §§ 25; 30, 2 for the Ode.

Stanza 1. 1–2. **Persia . . . son.** 'Philip's warlike son,' Alexander the Great, overthrew Darius and thus conquered Persia in 331 B.C. 3–5. **Aloft . . . throne.** By pronouncing these lines slowly and impressively, the reader catches the effect the poet wishes to produce, — the dignified majesty and self-important contentment of the victor. 6–11. **His . . . pride.** These longer lines, in contrast with the three preceding, resume a conversational tone — are merely narrative. In irregular verse, like that of an ode, this is apt to be the case with the longer iambic lines. 9. **Thais,** a favorite of Alexander, and a well-known and beautiful woman of the time. 12–15. **Happy . . . fair.** Notice and explain the effect of the repetitions. Finally examine the rhymes of the stanza, observing the change of rhyme system with each new thought of the stanza: thus (1) *a-a-b-b-a*, Alexander and his feast; (2) *c-c-c*, the peers; (3) *d-d-d*, Thais; (4) *e-f-f-e*, Alexander and Thais. What should you judge, from such groupings as these, to be an underlying principle of rhyme variations? Continue this study of rhyme-groupings for subsequent stanzas. What purpose does the chorus of this and the other stanzas seem to serve? What can you say of the onomatopoetic effect of these choruses?

Stanza 2. 20. **Timotheus,** a Theban musician of Alexander's time. 26. **seats above,** *i.e.* on Olympus. 28. **A dragon's . . . god.** In wooing mortals, Jupiter usually took some such form, *e.g.* a swan, a bull, a shower of gold, etc. 30. **Olympia,** Olympias, the mother of Alexander. 33. **an image,** *i.e.* Alexander. The musician flatters the conqueror by assigning to him the parentage of a demigod. 35. **A present deity**: see note on l. 33. 37–41. **With . . . spheres.** Note the self-conscious satisfaction with which Alexander assumes this rôle. Like Jupiter, he will shake the universe by a nod. Note, also, the way in which the iambic dimeter and trimeter lines picture this mood.

Stanza 3. 47–48. **The praise . . . young.** Observe the metre of these merely narrative lines. See note on ll. 6–11. For characteristics of Bacchus, see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 44. 49–53. **The jolly . . . comes.** Show how these lines picture repressed excitement, indicative of approaching Bacchanalian revels. 52. **honest** (Lat. *honestus*), handsome, open, frank. 53. **hautboys,** the modern oboe. Look up derivation of this word. 54–60. **Bacchus . . . pain.** Describe the difference in rhythmical effect between these lines and those just preceding, and show the corresponding difference in mood. What line in this stanza reaches the climax of excitement? Discuss the rhyme system of the stanza.

Stanza 4. 66–68. **Soothed . . . slain.** Discuss the metrical effect and evident mood of these lines. 70. **ardent,** used in its radical sense. See derivation. 72. **his, his,** to whom does each pronoun refer? 73. **Muse,** strain of music or song. 76. **too severe,** why '*too* severe'? 77. **Fallen,**

etc. Explain the fine effect of this repetition. What mood in the former, and what in the latter, part of this stanza? Trace the rhyme system as in stanza 1.

Stanza 5. **97. Lydian measures.** This music was soft and voluptuous: see *L'Alleg.* (136) and note. **97–106. Softly . . . provide thee.** Observe how the Lydian measure is pictured by the smooth trochaic lines, with their feminine (double) rhymes, liquid sounds, and frequent alliterations. **107–108. The many . . . cause.** Explain the change in metre. See note on ll. 6–11.

Stanza 6. Compare the metrical effects of this stanza with those of stanza 5, — sibilants with liquids, harsh word-sequences with smooth ones, irregular line lengths with regular ones, masculine with feminine rhymes, — giving instances of each. Show how these metrical effects picture the respective strains of music in the two stanzas, and the moods of Alexander which these strains arouse. On harsh and easy sequences of sound, see INTRODUCTION, § 21, 1–3. **132–135. See . . . eyes.** Such was the ancient conception of the Furies. See *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 54. **138–140. Grecian . . . plain.** With the Greeks burial was all-important, since without it their souls could not cross the Styx until after years of wandering. See *Cl. M.*, p. 47. **141. vengeance due.** 'Due' to whom, and why? **150. like another Helen.** Does this mean simply that Helen was the indirect cause of Troy's downfall, or is there any ground for saying that she may have actually helped burn the city? See *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 314. **151. flambeau.** See *Dict.*

Stanza 7. This is the stanza that links the ode to the occasion for which it was written. Observe that, for the most part, it is simple narrative, thus sharply contrasting with the excitement of the preceding stanza. **156–157. Ere heaving bellows . . . mute**, since St. Cecilia had not yet come. See introduction to notes. **162. vocal frame**, the structure ('frame') with a voice, the organ. **164–165. Enlarged . . . sounds**, *i.e.* produced sustained notes, as a reed instrument differs from a stringed instrument in having power of indefinitely prolonging its tones. **170. She . . . down.** According to some accounts it was the exquisite playing of St. Cecilia, according to others, her spotless purity, that attracted the angel to her. Compare the conception of this line with that of the well-known painting of St. Cecilia.

POPE

THE RAPE OF THE LOCK

Lord Petre, a young gentleman of London society, had aroused the anger of Miss Arabella Fermor, through "the trifling occasion of his having cut off a lock of her hair." The "quarrel" extended to the families and friends of both parties, and became so fierce that a Mr. Caryl, friendly to both, suggested to Pope that he ridicule the matter in a "comical" poem, and thus help to end the dissension. The resulting poem, in two cantos, was first printed in Lintot's *Miscellany* (1712) exactly as presented in this volume. For a comparison between this form and the enlarged edition published two years later, see the discussion following the sketch of Pope's life. As to the

effect of the poem, it need only be said that Miss Fermor was far from pleased with the notoriety which it thrust upon her, and that she was not reconciled to the offending Lord Petre through its influence.

The Rape of the Lock was called by Pope "an heroi-comical poem." It is really a mock-heroic or mock epic, in which commonplace events are purposely treated in such a manner as to raise them to a plane of false dignity and importance. The poem also incidentally burlesques, or parodies, lines and passages of the serious epics of Greece and Rome. However, it is an error to speak of it as a burlesque. Indeed, to the ordinary reader, unacquainted with Homer or Virgil, the poem has no element of the burlesque at all. But to every class of readers, as Hazlitt has said, it is "the perfection of the mock-heroic, the triumph of insignificance, the apotheosis of foppery and folly." *The Rape of the Lock* is an "occasional poem" — a poem called forth by some special incident or occasion — and has always been regarded as one of the most brilliant of the kind. *The Rape of the Lock* is, moreover, somewhat like the famous *Spectator Papers* of the same time, a most delightful satire on the frivolities and foibles of the society by which its author was surrounded. (On Epic, Mock-heroic, and Satire, see INTRODUCTION, §§ 31, 1, 2; 33.)

It is a curious fact that, although Pope within ten years was to receive the large sum of £9000 for his translations of Homer, he was paid for this better, though shorter, production exactly £22, — £7 for this first edition and £15 for the later one.

CANTO I. **1–12.** The Invocation and Exordium. **1–3. What . . . sing,** a parody from the first two lines of the *Iliad*. The poem is full of these parodies, and has always appealed with especial force to those who have an intimate knowledge of the Greek and Latin poets, and can thus appreciate how Pope "takes off" the stately lines of Homer and Virgil. **3. C——l.** Caryl (or Caryll) was a country gentleman of Sussex, for years a friend and correspondent of Pope. See introduction to notes. **4. Belinda.** This name for Miss Fermor occurs in the prefatory motto of the poem, and was substituted by Pope for *Polytine* in the lines of an epigram written by the Latin poet, Martial. **11–12. And . . . men** : *cf. Æneid*, I, 11.

13–34. The heroine of the poem arises and attends a boating party on the Thames. **13. Sol.** The excessive use of Greek and Latin proper names was one of the characteristics of the eighteenth-century Classical school. **15. Shock,** Belinda's lap-dog. **17. Thrice . . . ground.** Knocking against the floor ('ground') with the heel of a shoe or slipper was a customary way of summoning the maid. **18. striking watches.** It is interesting to find that these were invented over two centuries ago. At this point the revised edition added one hundred and thirty lines, introducing the Sylphs, describing Belinda's toilet, and closing the canto. **26. unfixed as those.** Why 'unfixed'? **33. female** : *cf.* use in *Deserted Village* (287).

35–50. The Baron's designs on a lock of Belinda's hair. **35. nymph,** Belinda, Miss Fermor. The word is used through the poem to mean maiden.

36. graceful. Give syntax. **41. springes,** snares or slip nooses. **45. baron,** Lord Petre : see introduction to notes. **50. Few . . . ends** : *cf. Æneid,* II, 390, of which this is almost an exact translation.

51–64. The rites and sacrifices offered by the Baron to 'propitious heaven.' This is a delightful parody on many similar occurrences in Greek and Latin epics. **51. Phœbus** : see note on l. 13. **52. Propitious,** a prolepsis. The Baron's purpose was to *make* heaven propitious. **53. Love,** here, as in l. 39, means Cupid. **54. vast French romances.** These works were indeed 'vast'; for instance, one of them, *Clelia* (*Clelie*), "appeared in ten volumes of eight hundred pages each" (Hales). See *Spectator,* No. 37. **55–56. Sylvia** and **Flavia,** evidently two of his 'former loves.' **59. billets-doux** (Fr. *billet,* a note + *doux* [Lat. *dulcis*], sweet), love letters. Note the spelling. Many editors have the singular, billet-doux, an evident mistake. **63. half his prayer.** Which half of the petition (l. 62) was granted? **63–64. The powers . . . air** : *cf. Æneid,* XI, 794–795, a close parallel. At this point the enlarged edition adds nearly one hundred lines, showing the preparations of the Sylphs to defend Belinda. This addition concludes Canto II.

65–82. The visit of the boating party to Hampton Court. This begins the third canto of the revision. **66. rising.** Explain. **67. a structure,** Hampton Court, about ten miles west of London, originally built by Cardinal Wolsey in the sixteenth century. **70. foreign tyrants.** The reference is especially to Louis XIV of France. **71. three realms.** What were they? **72. tea,** pronounced tāy in Pope's time. Though introduced into Europe a century before this time, tea was still a very expensive article, and was considered a great luxury. **75–80. In . . . dies.** Characterize the conversation. **76. was bit,** taken in, or beaten, at cards. **capotted.** To 'capot' is to take all the tricks in the game of piquet. In the revised edition this line is entirely changed to 'Who gave the ball, or paid the visit last?' **78. screen.** Japanese and Indian screens were then "the rage." **81. Snuff.** The habit of taking snuff had just been formed in England, and was popular even among ladies of fashion. See *Spectator,* No. 344. **supply.** Can the plural verb be justified?

83–104. The intoxication of coffee as an influence on the rash stratagem of the Baron. **85–86. When . . . dine.** These lines show something of Pope's satirical tendency. Croker speaks of them as forming a "repulsive and unfounded couplet." **86. wretches.** In what sense? **88. And . . . cease** : *cf. Æneid,* VII, 170. Here some eighty lines are added in the second edition, describing, in mock-heroic fashion, a game of cards between Belinda and the Baron. **90. berries . . . mill,** coffee, and the coffee-mill in which it is ground. Coffee had been common in England for about fifty years, having been introduced not long after the introduction of tea — shortly before 1650. **91. altars of Japan.** Japanned stands were very popular in Pope's time. **92. fiery spirits.** What is meant? **93. grateful,** to smell and taste. **94. China's earth,** china ware. **97–98. which . . . eyes.** A sarcastic allusion to the "oracles," or "would-be politicians," of the coffee-houses. **102–104. Scylla . . . Nisus** : see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.,* p. 201.

105–118. The rape (seizure) of the lock. **107. Clarissa.** To the beginning of Canto V of the revised (1714) edition Pope subsequently added thirty lines, which first appeared in the quarto of 1717. These lines were spoken by " Clarissa," on whom Pope made this annotation, — " a new character introduced in the subsequent editions, to open more clearly the moral of the poem." He seems to forget that he had given Clarissa a part to play in the very first (1712) edition. She evidently represents some friend of Miss Fermor and Lord Petre. **108. two-edged weapon** : see note on ' forfex,' l. 115. **109–110. So . . . fight.** Point out the humor of this comparison. **112. engine** : see note on *Lyc.* (130). **115. forfex,** a Latin word for a pair of shears. **116. divide,** a transitive verb. What is its object? **118. for ever.** Describe the effect of the repetition.

119–142. The anguish of the victim and the exultation of the victor. **120–124. And . . . lie.** Note the extravagance of the mock-epic. What gives these lines their humor ? **129. Atalantis.** The *New Atalantis* was a book of Pope's time, full of scandal of court and society, by a Mrs. Manley, who, though a notorious adventuress, was a friend of such literary men as Swift and Steele. **130. small pillow,** a pillow of rich material and design — perhaps something like a sofa pillow — which fashionable ladies used as a support for their heads and shoulders when receiving visits in their bedroom. This " fad " was copied from France, where at that time it was a way of receiving fashionable morning calls. See the *Spectator*, No. 45. **131–134. While . . . live** : *cf. Æneid,* I, 607–609. **135. date,** *i.e.* time at which it must fall. **137–138. Steel . . . Troy.** For an account of the siege of Troy, see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 277–317. What part did ' steel ' play in Troy's downfall ?

Canto II. **143–152.** The feelings of Belinda. This begins Canto IV of the revision. **143–144. But . . . breast** : *cf. Æneid,* IV, 1–2. **145–152. Not . . . hair.** Show what feelings Belinda had in common with each of these, — ' kings,' ' virgins,' ' lovers,' etc. **148. ancient lady,** evidently " old maid." **150. manteau,** cloak. **152. ravished** : *cf.* l. 48. Here follow in the revision about eighty-five lines, describing the Cave of Spleen.

153–180. 154. **Thalestris,** Mrs. Morley, a friend of Miss Fermor. 158. **bodkins,** pins used by women to fasten the hair. **leads,** used for doing up the hair ; just as paper is used in l. 159. **160. irons,** curling-irons. **166. Ease.** Give syntax. Meaning of the sentence ? **169. degraded toast.** Meaning ? **170. honor.** Meaning of this word here and in l. 165 ? How can it be ' lost ' in a ' whisper ' ? **171. fame.** Meaning here ? **174. Exposed through crystal.** The Baron evidently intends to have the lock set in a ring. **177. Hyde Park Circus,** the Ring, or fashionable drive of London. **178. And wits . . . Bow.** The Bow was the East End, or " city " part, of London — a favorite subject of satire for the fashionable wits of the eighteenth century. See the *Spectator*, No. 34. **179–180. Sooner . . . all.** Observe the anticlimax and its effect.

181 190. The remonstrance of Sir Plume. **181. Sir Plume,** Sir George

Brown, brother of Mrs. Morley (Thalestris). He was very angry with this liberty which Pope had taken, for the likeness was sufficiently accurate to be easily recognized by his friends. But, as has been often pointed out, Pope was never above taking unwarrantable liberties with private character. **182. her**, afterward changed to *the*, since she was his sister. **184. nice conduct.** Twirling the cane, brandishing it in the air, and the like, were actions much affected by the fops of the period. Addison ridicules this in *Tatler*, No. 103. **clouded cane**, a cane mottled with dark spots. **185. With . . . face.** Describe this picture. **187–190. And thus . . . hair.** What would you infer of the man from his speech? **188. Zounds.** Derivation of this word?

191–200. The Baron's reply. **191. again.** How is the word used here? **192. Who.** What is the antecedent? **195. honors shall renew.** Explain. **198. wear**, a transitive verb with its object omitted — a favorite construction in Pope: *cf.* 'divide,' l. 116. **199. He spoke**, a parody on the frequently recurring *dixerat* of Virgil.

201–231. Belinda's lament. **201. sorrow's pomp.** Explain. **203–205. red — head — said.** These lines form a triplet, a very rare thing in Pope. To avoid it, he omits l. 203 in the revised edition: *cf.* l. 319 — afterward omitted for the same reason. **208–209. Happy . . . seen**: *cf. Æneid*, IV, 657–658, — the lamentation of Dido. **214. marks**, makes tracks on, *i.e.* where there are no fashionable carriages. **215. ombre**, a card game described fully in the third canto of the revised poem. **bohea**, a kind of black tea, pronounced bohāy in the eighteenth century. Hence the rhyme. **218. youthful lords.** Lord Petre was at that time scarcely twenty years of age. **221. patch-box.** The wearing of black patches was very common among the ladies of this period. See the *Spectator*, No. 81. **228. uncouth**, here means ugly. See note on *L'Alleg.* (5). **231. sacrilegious.** Give the derivation. This concludes Canto IV of the revision.

232–267. The beginning of the struggle. **232. She said**: see note on l. 199. **233. But . . . ears**: *cf. Æncid*, IV, 440. **236–237. Not . . . vain.** For the story of Dido and Æneas, see *Cl. D.*, the *Æneid*, IV, or *Cl. M.*, pp. 350–352. At this point thirty lines (the speech of Clarissa) were added to the revised edition. See note on l. 107. **238–245. To arms . . . wound.** These eight lines are overdrawn, even for the mock-heroic; yet they have no little comic effect — partly on account of their very extravagance, and partly from their balance with the succeeding eight lines relating a similar combat of the gods. These fine ladies and gentlemen are fighting like "fish wives"— or like gods. **246–253. So . . . day.** The combat of the gods is detailed in the *Iliad*, XXI, 272–513. **248. 'Gainst . . . arms.** 'Mars' is the subject of 'arms,' 'Latona' the object of 'against.' Find out why the different gods took sides as they did in the Trojan War. See *Iliad*, *Cl. D.*, or *Cl. M.*, pp. 278, 284. **251. Blue Neptune.** Explain the adjective. On which side of the conflict was Neptune? See *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 169, 285. **253. And . . . day.** The 'pale ghosts' are the people of the underworld who are startled at the unwonted light as 'the ground gives way.' **257. One . . .**

song. ' In ' means in the act of uttering. Which of the two gave utterance to the metaphor and which to the song? **258. living death,** a common metaphor in Milton and other poets. **261. Those . . . killing.** Pope has given a note saying that these were " the words of a song in the opera of Camilla." **262–263. Mæander's flowery margin . . . dies.** Meander, a river in Asia Minor, noted for its winding course : *cf.* the verb meander. " The Meander was a famous haunt of swans, and the swan was a favorite bird with the Greek and Latin writers, one to whose singing they perpetually allude." (Professor Hales, in *Athenæum*, April 20, 1889). Moreover, the swan is supposed to sing most sweetly as it dies.

268–289. The overthrow of the Baron. **268–271. Now . . . subside.** A close parody of Homer's well-known lines in the *Iliad*, VIII, 69–73. See also *Æneid*, XII, 725–727. As a result of this judgment of Jove, the Baron is now doomed to defeat. **277. one finger and a thumb,** between which she held the snuff. **281. re-echoes,** as he sneezes. **282. th' incensed virago.** Look up original meaning and the derivation of ' virago.' **283. bodkin.** In modern terms we may say that her threatened action is equivalent to " stabbing with a hat-pin." **287. leaving you behind,** *i.e.* leaving you alive.

290–309. The disappearance of the lock. See ll. 61–64. **290–291. Restore . . . rebound.** A close imitation of Dryden's *Alexander's Feast*, ll. 35–36. **292–293. Othello . . . pain** : see *Othello*, III, 3. Does ' roared ' apply well to Belinda, even in mock-heroic ? **294. ambitious aims.** What were they and on whose part ? **298. must,** force of this word here ? **300. lunar sphere,** the moon. Derivation of ' lunar ' ? **301. all . . . lost,** *i.e.* trivial or insincere things. Note what they are in ll. 302–309. Pope says that he modelled this passage on the Italian poet Ariosto, — Canto XXXIV, of the *Orlando Furioso*. **302–303. heroes', beaux', wits.** The satire is evidently directed against the soldier as well as the fop. Explain. **304. death-bed alms.** Show point of the satire. **306–307. courtier's promises . . . sick man's prayers . . . tears of heirs.** Show insincerity of each of these. **308–309. Cages . . . butterflies.** Pope had little sympathy with scientific studies. **309. tomes of casuistry,** huge books full of learning such as that of the Middle Ages.

310–334. The victory of the Muse. **312. founder,** Romulus, raised after his death to become the God Quirinus : see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 61, 372. **313. Proculus,** who declared that he had received a vision from the risen Romulus. **314–315. A sudden star . . . hair.** Thus the lock became a comet. Look up derivation of comet. **316–317. Berenice's locks . . . light.** Berenice, the widow of Ptolemy III, cut off her hair and hung it up in the temple of Mars, in obedience to a vow. The hair disappeared, and was fabled to have been taken into the heavens, and changed into the constellation which bears her name, *Coma Berenices*. **317. disheveled.** Look up derivation and thus explain the use of the word. **318. beau monde,** the fashionable world (Fr. *beau*, fine + *monde*, world). **Mall.** Pall-mall (pronounced pell-mell), an old English ball game, has given the name ' Mall ' to

the place where it was played — afterward a fashionable walk in one of the parks of London. **319. As . . . stray** : see note on ll. 203–205. **321–324. Partridge . . . Rome.** Pope says, " John Partridge was a ridiculous star-gazer, who in his almanacks every year never failed to predict the downfall of the Pope and the King of France (Louis XIV), then at war with the English." **322. Galileo's eyes,** the telescope. Though Galileo was not the original inventor of the telescope, he may be said to have independently invented it, since the instrument he made in 1609 was constructed before he had seen any of the earlier ones. The early improvements, moreover, were almost entirely his. **326. shining sphere,** the heavens. **329. murders of your eye.** Explain. **331. fair suns,** her eyes. **333–334. This lock . . . name.** A prediction remarkably true. A lock of hair and a poet have immortalized the otherwise unknown ' Belinda.' Probably so trivial an incident has never before or since inspired so brilliant a comic poem.

The student should make a careful study of the heroic couplet as written by Pope, and of his skill in rhetorical and mock-logical artifices. In what respects can Pope's style be compared with Chaucer's ?

THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER

Pope's *Essay on Man* (1732–1734) having been criticized as tending toward fatalism, the poet published *The Universal Prayer* (1738) as summing up his essay, — " to show that his system [of philosophy] was founded in free-will, and terminated in piety." Note the resemblance of the beginning and the last four stanzas to the Lord's Prayer. This noble poem, which should be read with Pope's foibles in mind for several of its verses seem to have a personal reference, reveals the profounder and nobler aspects of his character, — aspects too often ignored.

GRAY

ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

Gray's *Elegy* has been called " for its size the most popular poem in any language." The reasons for this popularity are not far to seek. The poem deals with a theme of universal interest, to which the poet has contrived to give almost ideal expression. In its felicity of phrase, its melody of verse, its serenity and dignity of movement, there is little left to be desired. Its painstaking and self-critical author was not ready to give it to the world till seven years after it had been begun ; and when finally published in 1750, it at once sprang into a position of favor which it has never lost. Professor Gosse says of the *Elegy*, a little extravagantly perhaps, that it " has exercised an influence over all the poetry of Europe, from Denmark to Italy, from France to Russia." Though the poem in certain conventionalities of style and phrasing undoubtedly shows the influence of the artificial school of Pope, on the other hand its sincerity and human sympathy mark a decided breaking away from

the tenets of that school. Instead of the conventional heroic couplet, Gray chose for the poem what was, for that time, the comparatively rare quatrain, with iambic pentameter lines to be sure, but with alternating rhyme. That this verse-form exactly suits the poem, there can be little question.

This *Elegy* forms a good example of composition, simple, but full of thought. Except with careful reading it is apt to leave an impression, pleasing, but on the whole vague. In the following notes frequent questions have been asked to direct the student to the sequence of ideas. It will be well, also, to note the stanzaic groupings which follow.

1–12. 1. **curfew** : see note on *Il Pens.* (74). **parting**, departing, *i.e.* dying. Hence the ' knell ' : *cf.* l. 89. 4. **And . . . me.** Point out the words in this and the three preceding lines which show the time of day, and the loneliness and hushed quiet of the scene. 5. **glimmering.** Describe the glimmering of a landscape as darkness approaches. 6. **stillness holds.** Explain. 7–8. **Save . . . folds.** What words are onomatopoetic and what is their effect ? What intensifies the stillness ?

13–28. 13. **elms, yew-tree.** Why these particular trees ? 16. **rude,** in what sense ? Hales suggests that as the poet stands in the churchyard, it is the poorer people he is thinking of, since the richer are interred in the church, a place of greater sanctity, and greater security for the elaborate tombs. 20. **lowly bed.** Is this literal, or does it mean the grave ? 21. **blazing hearth.** What figure ? 22. **ply her evening care.** To what household tasks may this line apply ?

29–44. Into what two divisions does this passage fall ? 33. **boast of heraldry,** pride of birth. Heraldry is the science of recording genealogies. 37. **the fault.** For a suggestion of the meaning, see ll. 49–52. 39. **aisle** : see note on l. 16. 39. **fretted vault,** the arched roof of the church, with ornamentations of fretwork. 40. **pealing** : *cf. Il Pens.* (161). 41. **storied,** on which is inscribed an epitaph or ' story.' The urn, originally a receptacle for the ashes of the dead, is here an ornament for the tomb. For ' storied,' see *Il Pens.* (159). **animated bust,** lifelike statue. 42. **mansion** : see note on *Il Pens.* (92). 43. **Honor's voice,** words honoring the dead. **provoke,** in its radical sense (from Lat. *pro* + *vocare*, to call forth).

45–56. Show relation to preceding passage. 46. **pregnant with celestial fire.** As far as the spark of divinity or native ability is concerned they might have been kings (47) or poets (48). 50. **Rich . . . time.** Explain. **unroll.** The early books were simply *rolls* of parchment. *Cf.* derivation of *volume*. 51–52. **Chill Penury . . . soul.** Explain the figure in detail. Particularly discuss ' noble rage ' and ' genial current.' 53–56. **Full . . . air.** What is the application of these two figures to the preceding lines ? Do they express the same idea, or do you detect a difference ?

57–76. Showing both the limitations and the blessings of this simple country people. 57. **Hampden.** In 1636 John Hampden, a cousin of Cromwell, refused to pay ship money, a tax which the king was levying without the consent of Parliament. The ' **tyrant** ' he ' **withstood** ' was, of course,

Charles I. What would a 'village-Hampden' be, and what 'the little tyrant'? **60. Cromwell.** The personality and motives of the Protector were very much misunderstood in the eighteenth century: see l. 67. **61–64. Th' applause . . . eyes.** The four infinitives of this stanza are the objects of 'forbade' (65). **62. threats . . . despise.** To what may this refer and what does 'despise' mean? **63. To scatter . . . land.** How and in what position can a man 'scatter plenty'? **64. And read . . . eyes.** Explain in the light of the lines above. **67. to wade . . . throne**: see note on l. 60. **69–70. The struggling . . . shame.** Show meaning of each of these lines. **71–72. Or heap . . . flame.** In the time of Gray, and long before, it was often the practice of poets to attach themselves to some rich patron and direct their energies toward pleasing his vanity. **73. Far from . . . strife.** Show that this phrase modifies 'wishes,' and not 'to stray.' **74. to stray,** *i.e.* into forbidden paths. **75. cool sequested vale of life.** Meaning?

77–92. The preceding stanzas (ll. 13–76) really constitute the elegy sung by the poet in honor of those buried in the country churchyard. The lines of this passage refer to the rude memorials which even these humble people have set up in response to that universal instinct which requires something to perpetuate our memory. **77. even these bones**: *cf.* ll. 37–40. **79. uncouth**: see note on *L'Alleg.* (5). **81. unlettered,** the rude verse of some unschooled, rustic poet. **84. rustic moralist.** Meaning? Point out the solecism in this line. **85. prey,** an objective complement, — Whoever gave up as a willing prey to dumb Forgetfulness — this life. 'Prey' refers, not to 'who,' but to life. **dumb forgetfulness.** Discuss the adjective. **89–92. On . . . fires.** Hales suggests that the four lines of this stanza form a climax, the picture being of a person (1) near death, (2) dying, (3) immediately after death, (4) long since dead. In whichever state he may be, there is the same yearning for loving remembrance. **89. parting**: *cf.* l. 1 and note. **90. pious,** prompted by affection and devotion, such as that of a child for a parent, etc. *Cf.* the expression "the pious Æneas." **92. their wonted fires.** Meaning?

93–116. In these lines Gray imagines himself buried, like those of whom he is writing, in some humble country churchyard. **95. chance,** by chance. **96. kindred spirit,** perhaps some other contemplative poet. **101. yonder.** Note how this word adds to the vividness of the picture. *Cf.* 'yon' (105). **106–108. Mutt'ring . . . love.** It is with something akin to humor that Gray pictures a poet, — himself, as he would have appeared to this curious observer. **111. Another came,** another morning. **115. lay.** The word is used very loosely. What does it properly mean?

117–128. The Epitaph. In this we are given a picture, not so much of the actual Thomas Gray, as of Gray in the assumed character of the writer of this *Elegy*. In other words, we need not expect all the lines of the Epitaph to be strictly applicable to the personal life or character of the poet. In spirit they undoubtedly do apply. **118. A youth . . . unknown.** Was Gray known to Fortune? to Fame? **119. Science,** in its radical sense of learning (from Lat. *scientia*). **frowned not,** *i.e.* smiled. Was this true of

Gray? **120. Melancholy**: see note on *Il Pens.* (12). **124. a friend.** What is meant? **128. bosom,** in apposition with and explanatory of 'abode.' Why 'dread' abode?

Compare this *Elegy* with *Lycidas* and discuss the difference between the elegy and the reflective lyric like *Il Penseroso*. See INTRODUCTION, § 30, 4, 5. What order of poetry is this: interpretive or creative, and of what grade? (§ 35). Consider the kinds and fitness of the poetic images. What lines may be classed as supremely poetic — inevitable, and why? (See §§ 8; 34.)

GOLDSMITH

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

The Deserted Village, published in May, 1770, sprang at once into favor, passing through four editions in the first month. This popularity it has never lost through all the subsequent changes of literary fashion. That the influence of Pope and his school, which had been gradually dying out, is still felt by Goldsmith and his intimate friend and critic, Dr. Johnson, is seen clearly in the work of both poets. The two features of the Classical school here most evident are: (1) the use of the heroic couplet, and (2) the tendency of the poem to be didactic. As regards the latter feature, it need only be said that the best parts of the poem are those in which the author is most the poet and least the teacher of political economy. Many attempts have been made to identify the 'sweet Auburn' of the poem with the home of Goldsmith's boyhood, the village of Lissoy. Undoubtedly the pictures the poet draws are taken from memories of his early surroundings; yet he has used these only as suggestions to his imagination in building up an idealized *Deserted Village*.

1–34. Point out the two chief topics of this stanza, naming explicitly the beauties of scene and the social pleasures mentioned. **1. Auburn.** Lissoy, thought to be the original of Auburn, was a village in the centre of Ireland. **2. swain.** A very common word in eighteenth-century poetry. **4. parting**: see note to Gray's *Elegy* (1). **5. bowers,** a favorite word with Goldsmith: see ll. 33, 37, 47, 86, 366. **10. cot,** cottage — its original meaning. **12. decent**: see note on *Il Pens.* (36). **14. age.** What figure? **17. train,** Another of Goldsmith's favorite words. See ll. 63, 81, 135, 149, 252, 320, 337. Few authors are so inclined to repeat certain words as he. **19. circled.** Show just in what sense these pastimes 'circled.' **23. still,** ever — its usual meaning in poetry. **25. simply,** artlessly. **27. mistrustless.** Picture the self-satisfied smirking of the swain, blissfully unconscious of his real appearance or of the secret laughter.

35–50. Name explicitly the features of the 'deserted village,' showing the points of contrast between this and the first stanza. **35. lawn**: see notes on *L'Alleg.* (71). **37. tyrant's hand**: *cf.* 'one only master,' l. 39. The man of wealth is able to buy up large tracts of land, turning them into parks and

pleasure grounds, thus dispossessing the original tenant. **40. stints,** limits its productiveness. Why? *Cf.* note on l. 37.

51–56. 52. **decay.** In what sense and from what cause according to Goldsmith? 53. **may,** *i.e.* it makes little difference. 54. **breath,** *e.g.* the word of a king.

57–74. What change in England do these lines suggest as having taken place? 57. **England's griefs.** To what does the poet refer? 58. **rood.** How large is a rood? 63. **unfeeling train:** see notes on l. 37 and l. 17. 67. **want . . . allied,** the desires which riches bring. 72. **Lived in each look.** Meaning? 73. **kinder shore.** Where, and in what sense 'kinder'?

75–112. 75. **parent . . . hour.** Explain the figure. 76. **tyrant's:** *cf.* l. 37. 78. **tangling.** Why better than tangled? **83–96. In . . . last.** A stanza of pure and evidently sincere lyric. 84. **and . . . share.** How far was this true of Goldsmith's life? 86. **me.** The personal pronoun used for the reflexive. **87–88. To husband . . . repose.** Explain the figure, bearing in mind that a candle in motion burns more rapidly than one at rest. **93–96. as an hare . . . last.** The first of the fine similes which adorn this poem. Explain it in detail. For 'an,' see note on l. 268. **97–112. O . . . past.** Compare with preceding stanza as to beauty and sincerity.

113–136. The village before and after its desolation. Contrast these two pictures. 114. **Up yonder hill.** Where is the poet as he hears the sounds? **murmur,** a word which is pure onomatopœia. Look up derivation. 116. **softened.** Why? 119; 121. **gabbled; whispering,** onomatopœias. 122. **spoke the vacant mind,** indicated the care-free mind. Others interpret this as the loud, meaningless laugh of some village idiot. Which interpretation is the better, and why? 124. **And filled . . . made.** The nightingale, near at hand, is singing the solo, while the distant sounds are his accompaniment. 136. **sad historian.** She is an historian simply from the fact of her being there. How does her presence emphasize the loneliness of the place?

137–162. The village preacher. In creating this picture the poet is thought to have had in mind his father. Compare it with the "poor parson" of Chaucer's *Prologue* (477–528). 140. **mansion.** Look up derivation and *cf.* manse. Also see note on *Il Pens.* (92). 142. **passing,** an adverb modifying rich, meaning surpassingly. **forty pounds a year.** £40 had been the actual income of the poet's brother Henry, a parson in Ireland. This coincidence, together with the poet's grief over his brother's recent death, inclines us to believe that the brother as well as the father served as a model for this tenderly drawn portrait. 146. **By doctrines . . . hour,** *i.e.* he was not what we now term a "popular preacher." 148. **to raise . . . to rise:** *cf.* 'to fawn,' l. 145. Until after Goldsmith's time the infinitive was regularly used where we should now prefer a preposition with a participial object (gerund or gerundive construction). 154. **kindred.** In what sense? 157. **tales,** nominative absolute before a participle (ablative absolute in Latin). This was a favorite construction with Goldsmith. *Cf.* other instances in

ll. 79, 95, 181. **161. to scan** : see note on l. 148. **162. pity . . . charity.** Discuss.

163–192. **164. And e'en . . . side.** Show just what this line means. **167–170. And as a bird . . . way.** Explain in detail this simile. **172. dismayed,** filled with terrible forebodings. **173. The reverend champion stood.** In these words note the tone of quiet strength. **178. venerable,** in its radical sense, worthy of veneration. How did his looks 'adorn' the place? **179. double sway.** Why 'double'? **182. steady, honest.** Discuss these epithets. **183. endearing wile.** Describe this picture. **189–192. As some . . . head.** Show in detail the application of this simile.

193–216. The village master. The original of this picture is said to have been Thomas, or "Paddy," Byrne, an old ex-soldier, who was Goldsmith's teacher at Lissoy. **194. unprofitably gay.** Why 'unprofitably'? *Cf.* Gray's *Elegy* (55–56). **195. to rule**: see note on l. 148. **199. boding tremblers.** They trembled because of their foreboding. **209. terms and tides presage.** He could foretell the dates in which the courts were to assemble (*cf.* terms of court), as well as the times and seasons of religious festivals (as Christmas-tide, Yule-tide, etc.). **210. gauge,** measure the capacity of barrels; to the villagers an almost incredible accomplishment. **211–216. In . . . knew.** What words of this passage are especially apt in bringing out the humor of the lines?

217–236. The village inn. **217–218. spot . . . triumphed,** *i.e.* the inn: see l. 214. **218. triumphed.** How? **221. nut-brown draughts**: see *L'Allegro* (100). **222. grey-beard mirth and smiling toil.** Explain these metonymies. **226. parlor splendors.** Explain the epithet. **228. clock . . . clicked.** Note the onomatopœia. **229. contrived,** a participle. **231. use.** The wall doubtless had knot-holes which must be covered. **232. The twelve good rules,** said to have been made by Charles I, were as follows, according to Rolfe: (1) Urge no healths; (2) Profane no divine ordinances; (3) Touch no state matters; (4) Reveal no secrets; (5) Pick no quarrels; (6) Make no companions; (7) Maintain no ill opinions; (8) Keep no bad company; (9) Encourage no vice; (10) Make no long meals; (11) Repeat no grievances; (12) Lay no wagers. **the royal game of goose,** possibly something like the old game of fox and geese. **236. chimney,** fireplace.

237–250. **238.** Why 'tottering mansion'? **240. hour's importance.** Meaning? **243. farmer's news.** "The farmer's necessary visits to the neighboring market town would naturally make him the newsman" (Hales). **barber's tale,** the talkativeness of barbers is an old joke. **244. wood-man's ballad,** evidently a hunter's song. **248. mantling bliss.** Explain the metonymy.

251–264. A contrast between these simple pleasures of the poor and the conventional and artificial pleasures of the rich. **253. congenial,** in its radical sense. Look up derivation. **256. The soul . . . sway.** Explain and illustrate. **257. vacant,** care-free: *cf.* l. 122. **260. wanton wealth.** Explain the epithet. **262. Toiling pleasure.** Meaning?

265–286. An apostrophe to those who really have the good of England at heart, but who, in the poet's opinion, are dazzled by the growing wealth of the country. **267. 'Tis yours,** *i.e.* your duty. **268. an happy.** According to the present usage regarding the indefinite article before aspirated *h*, *a* is used before monosyllables or polysyllables accented on the first syllable, as a hare, a history ; in other cases *an* is used, as an historian. **269. loads of freighted ore.** This seems to be the money coming into England in payment for exported goods which ought really never to have left the country. **270. shouting Folly.** Explain the metonymy. **274. the same.** No useful products have been imported. **275. Not so the loss,** etc., for the wealth which has come in (269) serves only to add to the luxury of the rich man, and to enable him to encroach on the lands that are giving sustenance to the poor. See note on l. 37. **276. poor.** Is this the subject or the object of 'supplied' ? **279–280. The robe . . . growth.** Thus luxuries, as well as money (269), have come in as equivalent for the necessities so unwisely exported. **281. seat,** *i.e.* country-seat. For such compounds, see note on *L'Alleg.* (120). **282. Indignant . . . green.** Explain. **283–284. Around . . . supplies** : see note to ll. 279–280. It must be admitted that in the passage above Goldsmith's ideas on political economy are very crude.

287–302. Do you enjoy this simile more or less than the three earlier ones, and why ? **293. solicitous to bless,** anxious to charm. **299. famine . . . smiling land.** Explain the apparent contradiction.

303–308. **308. bare worn common is denied.** Pancoast defends these statements of Goldsmith by quoting from Lecky's *History of England in the Eighteenth Century:* "Whole villages which had depended on free pasture land and fuel dwindled and perished, and a stream of emigrants passed to America."

309–336. The sorrows of the city's poor. **311. ten thousand.** The stating of a large definite number for a large indefinite number forms a species of synecdoche. **baneful.** Find meaning by looking up derivation. **314. Extorted . . . woe.** Explain. **315–318. Here . . . way.** Both antithesis and parallelism. **316. artist,** artisan. **319. dome,** in its radical sense (from Lat. *domus*, a house). **322. rattling chariots clash.** Show effect of the onomatopœia. **torches,** used before the days of street lights. **330. Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn.** One of the best lines in all English poetry of nature. **336. wheel and robes of country brown,** spinning-wheel and the plain dress of a country girl.

337–362. In this stanza we see a very prominent trait of Goldsmith — a tendency to let imagination and prejudice supply the place of exact knowledge. He speaks of Georgia as if it were tropical South America, and very probably knew no better. **344. Altama,** the Altamaha, a river in Georgia. **to,** in sympathy or unison with. **347–358. Those . . . skies,** an admirable picture of a tropical jungle, but hardly Georgia ! **359–362. Far . . . love.** Contrast the quiet beauty of these lines with the horrors of the lines preceding.

363–384. The 'parting day.' **363. parting** : see note on l. 4. **372. new found worlds.** To what does the poet refer? **374. only.** What does 'only' modify, and is its position correct? **380. cot** : see note on l. 10. **381. thoughtless babes.** Significance of the epithet. **384. silent manliness of grief.** Compare the grief of the husband with that of the wife.

385–394. Apostrophe to luxury. **386. things like these.** To what does the poet refer? **387–388. How do . . . destroy.** Like an opiate, these 'potions' first seem to soothe and give pleasure, but eventually bring certain ruin and death. **389–394. Kingdoms . . . round.** Explain this figure in detail. **391. draught,** of the 'potions' (387).

395–430. The exodus of the 'rural virtues' from England and an apostrophe to departing 'Poetry.' **398–402. I . . . strand.** These lines form a good illustration of the figure called *vision*. **408. Still first . . . invade** : see note on *Il Pens.* (46–48). **409. degenerate times.** This was a very barren period in the history of English poetry. Though Johnson and Gray were living, neither had written for years; while Burns and Cowper did not write until fifteen years after *The Deserted Village* was published. The poet professes to ascribe this situation to 'degenerate times' in England, during which the Muse was 'neglected and decried.' **412. My shame in crowds, my solitary pride.** Goldsmith's appearance in public was not imposing. He wrote better than he talked. The actor, Garrick, said of him in his famous mock-epitaph :—

> "Here lies Nolly Goldsmith, for shortness called Noll,
> Who wrote like an angel, but talked like poor Poll";

but it is more than likely that much of "Noll's" Irish humor escaped his more deliberate English friends. **413–414. Thou source . . . keep'st me so.** Goldsmith was notoriously one of the most improvident of men. He never learned the value of money, and spent it as fast or faster than he earned it. **415. nobler arts.** To what does the poet refer, and how is poetry a guide by which they excel? **418. Torno's cliffs,** *i.e.* the cliffs overhanging the river Tornea or Torneo, between northern Sweden and Russia. **Pambamarca,** a mountain near Quito in Ecuador, South America. **419. equinoctial fervors,** torrid heat. **421. prevailing over time.** Discuss. **422. Redress,** make man forget. **427–430. That . . . sky.** These lines are said to have been added by Dr. Johnson. Can you detect a difference from the rest of the poem in style? Show why, according to the poet, 'trade's proud empire' is like an artificial wall, doomed to be swept away, while the 'self-dependent power' of a 'bold peasantry' will forever resist the elements.

Point out in this poem the poetic figures that you consider to be most fitting, and classify them. Compare the idyllic descriptions with those of *L'Allegro*, and the character-sketches with Chaucer's in the *Prologue*. How do Goldsmith's imagination and humor compare with Pope's in the *Rape of the Lock*? Is the heroic couplet more or less "run on"? (See INTRODUCTION, § 24, 1.)

BLAKE

In his highest poetic flights Blake anticipated the mood and manner of more than one of the better known singers of the new romantic age : Wordsworth and Coleridge in their rapturous simplicity of diction and in the consciousness of communion with the spirit of nature ; both of these and Byron and Shelley in their roseate dreams of political freedom ; Byron and Shelley in their disdain for social convention, and Shelley especially in the prophecy and mystic imagery of an era of brotherly love. Few of Blake's very few but precious songs need annotation. Only two notes are offered here : the " ' weep, 'weep " of the first stanza of *The Chimney Sweeper* is the street-cry (for ' sweep, sweep ') of the trade ; the word ' Auguries,' in the title of the last song, signifies divining powers or divinations, — the divinations of innocence. — The first three poems are from *The Songs of Innocence ;* the lines on *Auguries* are the beginning of a poem which existed for a long time in manuscript only. The student will greatly enjoy reading the other songs of Blake's three slender collections.

BURNS

In Edinburgh, in 1787, Burns met James Johnson, an engraver who was publishing the first volume of a collection of Scottish, English, and Irish songs and music. Burns became the chief contributor to the succeeding five volumes, collecting old airs and composing new words to many of them. " For the mere love of the thing, and without fee or reward, ungrudgingly he worked day and night for the last nine years of his life to illustrate the airs of Scotland, and he died with the pen in his hand. His farming brought him no riches, his business of gauger only weariness, his songs nothing at all — then. But it is by his songs that he is best known and will be longest remembered." In all collections that may ever be made of the world's best known and best loved social songs, or patriotic songs, or amatory, or humorous, or bacchanalian songs, Burns will always be represented by one or more lyrics of preëminent worth and popularity. To the fact that the germs of many of his lyrics lie in old folk-songs and that he composed for the inimitable airs of folk-music, is due in large part the extraordinary freshness, truth, and singable quality of his songs. But Burns borrowed only to transfigure, and the old tunes were his by the divine right of perfect understanding and appreciation. No lyrics are more musical than his. Most of the Elizabethan songs, indeed, had melodies written for them and were composed with that expectation ; but Burns reversed the process by almost invariably fitting the words to the tune. In composing he would repeatedly hum the old air, feeling its quality and catching its inspiration, so that he might find a theme and words that were suitable. Although in this way he contributed over two hundred songs to Johnson's collection

The Scots Musical Museum (6 vols., 1787–1803) and to George Thomson's *Scottish Airs* (5 vols., 1793–1818), yet to only a few of these, in the original editions, was the name of Burns attached.

AULD LANG SYNE (1796; written 1788). There is some uncertainty concerning the authorship of this most famous of social songs, but it is highly probable that most of it is Burns's own composition. To previous songs he was indebted for the germ of the song, the old and common refrain, "For auld lang syne"; for the first line, "Should auld acquaintance be forgot"; and for the sentiment of the following line. Texts of the song vary. In a copy in Burns's handwriting, found in an interleaved volume of the *Scots Museum*, the fourth line is "And days o' syne?" the fifth line is "And for auld lang syne, my jo," and the ninth is "And surely ye'll be your pint-stowp!" "Jo," in the above version of the fifth line, is a term of friendly address, — "dear"; literal meaning, joy. 4. **auld lang syne**, old long ago, *i.e.* days of long ago. "Jamieson, in his Scottish Dictionary, describes 'syne' as follows: 'To a native of this country it is very expressive, and conveys a soothing idea to the mind, as recalling the memory of joys that are past.' This is precisely what the whole of the song of Burns does, and it is the central source of its immense popularity" (J. C. Dick, *The Songs of Robert Burns*, p. 435). 'Syne' is our word *since*. 9. **be**, pay for. **pint-stowp**, pint-stoup, — "a pint-vessel containing two English quarts." 13. **braes**, hillsides. 14. **pou'd**, pulled. **gowans**, wild daisies. 16. **sin'**, since. 17. **paidl'd**, paddled, waded. **burn**, brook. 18. **Frae**, from. **dine**, dinner-time, noon. 19. **braid**, broad. 21. **fiere**, friend. 22. **gie**, give. 23. **gude-willy waught**, a long drink of good-will; recalling the 'cup o' kindness' of the chorus. — In one version the second stanza is put last. Why is it more appropriate in its present place?

OF A' THE AIRTS THE WIND CAN BLAW (1790). This very well-known and popular song was written in 1788 during the poet's honeymoon. Jean is his wife, Jean Armour, and the original title was "I love my Jean." 25. **airts**, directions. 26–27. The song was composed at Ellisland, while his wife was at Mossgiel. **bonie**, beautiful, merry, good, winsome. 29. **row**, roll. 38. **shaw**, wood.

HIGHLAND MARY (1799; written 1792). Burns said that he was especially pleased with this song and that the subject of it was one of the most interesting episodes of his youth. Highland Mary is the Mary Campbell to whom his *Highland Lassie* and *To Mary in Heaven* are addressed. Burns said she was "a warm-hearted, charming young creature" whom he had loved ardently and had hoped to marry. She died suddenly of a malignant fever. She was the daughter of a Clyde sailor, and many readers of Burns's poetry have come to regard her "as a sort of bare-legged Beatrice — a Spiritualized Ideal of Peasant Womanhood." But there seems to be insufficient basis for such appreciation. 41. **braes**, hillsides. 44. **drumlie**, turbid. 45. **simmer**, summer. **unfauld**, unfold. 49. **birk**, birch. 57. **mony**, many. 66. **aft**, oft. **hae**, have. Note the absence of true rhymes in

these lines and the effect of the hypercatalectic endings with repetition of sounds (instead of rhymes). See INTRODUCTION, § 20, 4.

BONIE DOON (1808 ; written 1791). There are three versions of this song. The third and best known version (1792) is an alteration of the second version, which we have printed, to fit it for the tune called " The Caledonian Hunt's Delight." The alteration consisted of adding two syllables to every second line. The second version, however, is poetically superior to the third. 73. The first line of the third version reads, " Ye banks and braes o' bonie Doon." **Doon.** The river Doon, about thirty miles in length, falls into the Firth of Clyde two miles south of Ayr, near the birthplace of Burns. **bonie** : see above, l. 27. **78. bough,** — pronounce after the Scottish fashion, to rhyme with ' true.' **84. wist,** knew. **85. aft,** see above, l. 66. **87. ilka,** every. **91. staw,** stole.

DUNCAN GRAY (1798 ; written 1792). " Duncan Gray," wrote Burns, " is that kind of lighthorse gallop of an air which precludes sentiment. The ludicrous is its ruling feature." Founded upon an older song, but in treatment highly original, this is one of the most famous of Burns's humorous songs. **94. o't,** of it. **95. Yule,** Christmas ; see *Dict.* **fou,** full, drunk. **97. coost,** cast. **98. asklent,** askance. **unco skeigh,** very skittish. **99. gart,** made. **abeigh,** off. **101. fleech'd,** coaxed. **103. Ailsa Craig** (Crag) : " a rocky islet in the Firth of Clyde, opposite Ayr, much frequented by sea-fowl, whose screaming it has endured for ages without remonstrance." **105. baith,** both. **106.** Wept his eyes both bleared and blind. **107. lowpin,** leaping. **linn,** waterfall. **109. are but a tide,** *i.e.* ebb and flow. **111. sair to bide,** hard to abide, endure. **114. hizzie,** jade. **115. gae,** go. **123. een,** eyes. **sic,** such. **130. smoor'd,** smothered. **131. crouse and canty baith,** hearty and jolly both.

SCOTS WHA HAE (1794 ; written 1793). At the village of Bannockburn, three miles south of Stirling in Scotland, on June 24, 1314, thirty thousand Scots under Robert Bruce totally defeated one hundred thousand English under Edward II, — the most glorious victory in the many wars for Scottish freedom. In July, 1793, according to one story, Burns, while on a rainy-day walk through some savage and desolate district of Galloway, composed the intensely patriotic " Scots Wha Hae," an imaginary address of Bruce to his followers on the morning of the battle. According to another account the poem was written a little later in the same year. It reflects the enthusiastic regard of the poet, so he tells us, for the ancient Scottish victory, intensified " by glowing ideas of some other struggles of the same nature, not quite so ancient," — *i.e.* the French Revolution. The stanza is that of *Helen of Kirkconnel*, a ballad that Burns despised. One critic notes that " in grammar, style, cast, sentiment, diction, and turn of phrase, the ode, though here and there its spelling deviates into Scots, is pure eighteenth-century English." But the stirring heroism of the speech in freedom's cause belongs to every age. The poem is one of the most forceful, popular, and dramatic of our many songs of liberty and independence. **133. Wallace.** In 1297,

Sir William Wallace, one of Scotland's noblest patriots and heroes, defeated the English at the battle of Stirling Bridge. For several years thereafter he carried on war against England, but in 1305 he was betrayed, taken to London, and executed for treason. **138. lour,** lower ; *cf.* leer, and see *Dict.* **155. Liberty's in every blow.** This battle achieved the independence of Scotland, which was acknowledged in 1328.

A MAN'S A MAN FOR A' THAT (1795). Burns asserted, probably in ironic reference to a foolish statement of a contemporary critic that love and wine were the only themes for song-writing, that this great prophetic song of democracy and brotherhood was not real poetry ! " This [song] has probably won more fame for Burns beyond the seas than any other of his writings, and it has been translated into at least nine different European languages. At the time it was written the Continent was in commotion ; the democratic opinions pervading France had extended to other countries, and the mute masses had found a voice." The refrain, " For a' that, an' a' that " (for all that, and all that), was adopted from older songs. **158. hings,** hangs. **163. the guinea's stamp.** Rank is merely the indication of real worth, like the stamp on a coin (guinea ; see *Dict.*). **164. gowd,** gold. The man's the gold, rank or no rank, stamp or no stamp. **166. hodden-gray,** coarse woollen cloth. **173. birkie,** smart, or conceited, fellow. **ca'd,** called. **176. coof,** dolt. **178. riband** (ribbon), **star,** — insignia of nobility. **181–182.** *Cf. Deserted Village* (53–54). **183. aboon,** above. **184. he mauna fa' that,** he cannot pretend to (accomplish) that. **192. bear the gree,** have the highest honor, the first place.

A RED, RED ROSE (1794). This love song, perhaps the most universally popular of all lyrics of its kind, was made up, with omissions, alterations, and original additions, from an old song Burns knew in his youth. The idea and diction are so very simple, natural, and inevitable that, as some one has said, the reader on seeing the poem for the first time imagines he has seen it before. The version which prefixes an " O " to the first and third lines was the product of an editor.

TO A MOUSE

Written 1785. **1. sleekit,** sleek. **4. brattle,** hurry. **5. laith,** loath. **6. pattle,** a small stick for cleaning the plough. **13. whyles,** at times. **15. A daimen-icker in a thrave,** an occasional ear of grain in twenty-four sheaves. **17. lave,** rest. **20. wa's,** walls. **21. big,** build. **22. foggage,** grass or moss remaining through the winter. **24. snell,** biting. **29. coulter,** blade in front of the ploughshare. **34. hald,** holding. **35. thole,** endure. **36. cranreuch,** hoar-frost. **37. no thy lane,** not alone. **40. a-gley,** awry.

THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT

This poem was written in 1785, when Burns was on the farm at Mossgiel. As a simple pastoral idyl it is not excelled by many poems of our language. While it does not possess the delicacy and fire of some of the shorter lyrics, it

gives noble and sincere expression to what, in spite of his frailties, the poet knew to be a true ideal of Christian manhood. We are told that Burns was led to write this poem because of the vivid impression made upon him by the nightly family worship in his father's household — an experience to which he had been accustomed from a child. As his brother Gilbert records, Robert always " thought there was something peculiarly venerable in the phrase, ' Let us worship God,' used by a decent, sober head of a family, introducing family worship." Burns's father belonged to the class of which the poem treats, and was, no doubt, to a very considerable extent, the original from which ' the Cotter ' was drawn. In other respects, however, the picture, though typical, is imaginary, and refers to thousands of other Scotch peasant families as well as to that of Burns.

1–9. Give the metre and rhyme of this stanza. See INTRODUCTION, § 24, 5, and the notes on *Faerie Queene*. 1. **friend**, Robert Aiken, a solicitor in Ayr, who was a life-long friend and patron of the poet. 2. **No mercenary bard**: *cf.* note to Gray's *Elegy* (71–72). 5. **simple Scottish lays**, the humble Ayrshire dialect which Burns has immortalized. The word ' lays ' was used loosely by eighteenth-century poets. *Cf.* Gray's *Elegy* (115).

10–27. 10. **blaws**, blows. The Scotch dialect frequently uses *a* in place of the English *o*. **wi'**, with. The final consonant sound is regularly omitted in many Scotch words. *Cf.* o' for of; a' for all; an' for and; youthfu' for youthful. **sugh**, sough: see *Dict.* 12. **frae**, from. **pleugh**, plough. 13. **craws**: see note on l. 10. 14. **Cotter**, the inhabitant of a cot. See note on *Deserted Village* (10). 15. **moil**, toil or drudgery. Look up derivation and successive meanings. 18. **And weary . . . bend**: *cf.* Gray's *Elegy* (3). 21–22. **Th' . . . glee**. The Scotch dialect seems to be especially adapted to the fit expression of simple home life and its emotions. Try to turn these words into English, and note their loss in effect. 21. **stacher**, toddle with short tottering steps, as a child. 22. **flichterin**, fluttering. 23. **wee bit ingle**, cosy little fire or fireplace with its cheerful blaze. 24. **wifie**. The *ie* is a diminutive, frequently met with in Scotch, suggesting endearment. 26. **carking**, fretting or worrying. 27. **toil**, pronounced tīle.

28–54. 28. **Belyve**, presently. 30. **ca'**, drive. **herd**, herd the neighbors' cows. **tentie**, attentive. 33. **youthfu'**: see note on l. 10. **e'e**, eye. 34. **braw**, fine, handsome. 35. **deposite**. Note accent as shown by rhythm. **sair-won**, hard-earned. 38. **spiers**, asks, inquires. 40. **uncos**, news or unknown happenings, from uncouth (unknown). See note on *L'Alleg.* (5). 44. **Gars auld claes**, makes old clothes. **amaist**, almost. 45. **a' wi'**: see note on l. 10. 46–54. **Their . . . aright**, the father's ' admonition ' (45). 47. **younkers**, youngsters. 48. **eydent**, diligent. 49. **jauk**, fool away their time. 51. **duty**. The word here evidently refers to their regular morning and evening prayers. *Cf.* the next three lines.

55–72. 59. **wily**. Explain the unusual sense in which this word is used here. 62. **hafflins**, half. 63. **Weel . . . rake**. Explain this line as a happy ending to the little drama of the stanza. 64. **ben**, into the inner or

living room — one of the two rooms of the typical Scotch cottage. **66. no ill ta'en.** Compare, as to effect, with some English equivalent, such as "well received." **67. cracks**, chats, trying to make the youth "feel at home." **kye**, cows. **69. blate an' lathfu'**, bashful and shy or sheepish. **70. wiles**: *cf.* 'wily,' l. 59. **72. bairn**, another word inimitable in English. *Cf.* l. 28. **lave**, rest, *i.e.* other girls.

73–90. Compare these and other English stanzas of the poem with those of the Scotch dialect. Which do you enjoy the more, and why? **75. I've paced . . . round**, a confession of the poet, only too true. **78. cordial**, heart-reviving drink. **vale**: *cf.* the expression "vale of tears." **81. thorn**, the white-thorn or hawthorn.

91–117. **91. board**: see *Dict.* for the history of this word. **92. halesome parritch**, wholesome porridge, probably of oatmeal. **93. soupe**, milk. In general it means any liquid used as food. **hawkie**, cow. **94. 'yont the hallan**, beyond the partition wall, where, in the case of the more humble cottages, the cow was kept. **96. weel-hained kebbuck**, well-kept cheese. **fell**, sharp, tasty. **98. garrulous**, almost over-talkative in her attempt to be entertaining. **99. towmond**, twelvemonth. **sin' lint was i' the bell**, since flax was in full blossom. **100. supper**, a nominative absolute before a participle. *Cf.* the ablative absolute in Latin. **103. ha'-Bible**, originally the Bible kept in the "hall" or chief room of the house. Later the term came to be applied to the large family Bible of every household, the original force, 'ha',' disappearing. **104. bonnet**, the blue woollen cap of the Scotch peasant. The word 'bonnet' as a term for a man's head covering, though now restricted to Scotland, was once common in England. *Cf. Lyc.* (104). **105. lyart haffets** (half-heads), gray temples, the locks about his temples being mixed with gray. **106. strains.** Determine the syntax. The reference seems to be to the *Psalms*. **107. wales**, selects or chooses. **108. Let us worship**: see the introduction to these notes. **111. Dundee**, an old Scottish psalm tune, dating from the middle of the sixteenth century. **112**; **113. Martyrs**; **Elgin**, also favorite Scottish psalm tunes. **113. beets**, adds fuel to, *i.e.* the psalm feeds the flame already in their hearts. **114. lays**: see note on l. 5. **115. Compared . . . tame.** This line has been sometimes cited to illustrate the Scotch prejudice of Burns. However, it seems to show nothing more than a feeling of the inadequacy of 'Italian trills' as sacred music. The poet acknowledges the *beauty* of Italian music in the expression 'tickled ears.'

118–162. **119. Abram . . . high**: see *Genesis* xv. **120–121. Moses . . . progeny**: see *Exodus* xvii. **121. Amalek**, the tribe that attacked the Israelites in the desert. **122–123. Or how . . . ire**: see *II Samuel* ix. 13–17. **122. royal bard**, David. **124. Or . . . cry**: see *Job* iii. **125. Or . . . fire**, the prophecies in the book of *Isaiah*. **wild, seraphic fire.** Explain. **126. holy seers**, the Prophets. **tune the sacred lyre.** Explain the figure. **127. Christian volume**, the New Testament. **128–130. How . . . head**, The four *Gospels*. **131. How . . . sped**, the *Acts*. **132. The precepts . . .**

land, the various *Epistles.* **133–135. How he** (St. John) . . . **command,** the book of *Revelation.* See especially chap. xviii. **133. Patmos,** an island in the Mediterranean, whither John was banished, and where he saw the visions recorded in *Revelation.* **135. Bab'lon's doom.** This has been interpreted to signify the downfall of injustice and oppression, evils which were notoriously characteristic of Babylon. Observe that in these two stanzas the poet gives a running sketch of the whole content of the Scriptures. **138. Hope . . . wing.** The poet is loosely quoting this line from Pope's *Windsor Forest.* **140. uncreated rays.** Meaning? **144. circling Time.** Explain. **150. sacerdotal stole.** Look up these words, and explain. **156. parent-pair,** a quaint and expressive term.

163–189. **165. Princes . . . kings:** *cf. Deserted Village* (53–54) — lines which Burns probably had in mind. **166. An . . . God.** This famous line is from Pope's *Essay on Man.* **167. certes,** an archaic word, meaning truly. **176–177. And . . . vile,** *cf.* with Goldsmith's arraignment of luxury in the *Deserted Village.* **180. And . . . isle.** Explain this fine figure. **182. Wallace,** one of the Scottish national heroes, leader of the Scots when they tried to gain their freedom in 1297. See note on *Scots Wha Hae.* **188. still,** ever, always. **patriot-bard:** *cf.* with this hopeful prayer the despondency of Goldsmith's *Deserted Village,* where he sees poetry leaving the land.

WORDSWORTH

TINTERN ABBEY

This poem shares with the *Ancient Mariner* the distinction of forming by far the most noteworthy portion of the *Lyrical Ballads.* It is not only one of the best poems Wordsworth ever wrote, but is, in the opinion of many critics, one of the best poems ever written. Professor Saintsbury, in his *History of English Literature,* expresses this opinion as follows: "Perhaps twice only, in *Tintern Abbey* and in the *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality,* is the full, the perfect Wordsworth with his half-pantheistic worship of nature, informed and chastened by an intense sense of human conduct, of reverence, and almost of humbleness, displayed in the utmost poetic felicity. And these two are accordingly among the great poems of the world. No unfavorable criticism on either has hurt them, though it may have hurt the critics. They are, if not in every smallest detail, yet as a whole, invulnerable and unperishable. They could not be better done."

Wordsworth has this to say concerning the composition of *Tintern Abbey:* "No poem of mine was composed under circumstances more pleasant for me to remember than this. I began it upon leaving Tintern, after crossing the Wye, and concluded it just as I was entering Bristol in the evening, after a ramble of four or five days with my sister. Not a line of it was altered, and not any part of it written down till I reached Bristol. It was published almost immediately after" — (in the *Lyrical Ballads,* 1798).

As will be noted, the poem is in blank verse. Since there are no stanzaic

or "paragraph" divisions to distinguish units of thought — such as are found in the blank verse of Milton, Thomson, or Tennyson — we have attempted in these notes to indicate the natural divisions.

1–22. **1. Five years.** From this we may determine the poet's age on his former visit to the Wye. **3–4. These waters . . . springs.** The Wye rises near Mt. Plinlimmon in Wales, and flows south one hundred and thirty miles into the Severn. Tintern Abbey is a famous ruin in Monmouthshire. Note the onomatopœia in these lines. **5–8. cliffs . . . sky.** Describe the picture. **12. this season,** July. **16–22. farms . . . alone.** Note how the seclusion is accentuated by details of description. **16. sportive wood.** Why 'sportive'?

22–49. Wordsworth shows how the memory of his former visit has influenced him during the past five years: (1) ll. 25–30; (2) ll. 30–35; (3) ll. 35–49. **24. As . . . eye.** Explain. **29. purer mind.** What does this mean? **30. feelings.** Syntax? What are 'feelings of unremembered pleasure,' and how are they like 'unremembered acts,' l. 34? **38–40. In which . . . world.** What is the mood of these lines? In what sense is the world 'unintelligible'? **42. affections,** the emotional in man as contrasted with the more coldly intellectual. **43–49. the breath . . . things.** This may be described as a state of spiritual yet mystical exaltation — a state in which the soul of man seems to rise above its bodily limitations and come into direct communion with the Divine, so that the mysteries of life are solved. The remembrance of the 'beauteous forms' of nature, the poet claims, leads him into this 'blessed mood.' Consider carefully the fitness of the imagery here and elsewhere in the poem, and determine the names of the poetic figures. (See INTRODUCTION, § 8.)

49–57. The solace received from memories of the Wye. **51–52. shapes Of joyless daylight.** To what does this refer?

58–65. **60. sad perplexity,** as he tries to make the actual scene before him conform to his memory-pictures of the past five years. **64–65. life . . . years.** Explain, in the light of the poet's former experience.

65–83. His attitude toward nature at the time of his former visit. Describe it. On the poetic use of memory-images, see INTRODUCTION, §§ 6; 7. Exemplify here. **65. so,** refers to what? **73–74. The coarser . . . gone by.** In this parenthesis is hinted a still earlier attitude toward nature — the boy's animal joy in mere living. **75–80. To me . . . love.** Then the passion for nature was entirely sensuous — full of 'aching joys' in the sights and sounds about him. **81–82. remoter . . . supplied.** A suggestion of the poet's present and maturer attitude toward nature.

83–102. The recompense for having lost his former 'dizzy raptures.' *Cf.* the similar passage in the *Ode on Immortality* (176–187). **88–93. For . . . subdue.** Explain this first compensatory gift. With the last three lines *cf.* ll. 184–185 of the *Ode*. **91. The still, sad music of humanity**: see INTRODUCTION, § 34, on poetic touchstones; point out others in this poem, justifying your choice. **93–102.** The second and greater of the 'gifts' (86).

Through nature and in nature the poet sees God. An eloquent and artistic exposition of pantheism, a doctrine that strongly attracted Wordsworth in his earlier years. God's dwelling is in nature and 'in the mind of man,' *i.e.* these things are but different expressions of God; the totality of them *is* God. The poet seems to have still held to this belief, though in a somewhat modified form, when he wrote the *Ode on Immortality*. **100. A motion and a spirit.** Syntax, and significance of the words? **101. thinking things,** 'the mind of man,' l. 99. **objects of all thought,** *e.g.* nature.

102–111. 102. **still.** Does this mean always or even yet? **106–107. both . . . perceive.** The poet here defines his conception of nature. It is partly material, yet partly ideal — projected from his mind, created by his 'eye and ear.' Though partly objective it is also partly subjective. Nature is not the same to all beholders, because they "see it with different eyes." **107–111. well pleased . . . being.** Explain carefully each of these metaphors, showing in what sense nature is 'anchor,' 'nurse,' 'guide,' 'guardian,' 'soul of moral being.'

111–134. But even if the poet were without the comfort of these *maturer* thoughts, he would still be able to call back his *former* pleasures, through the companionship and inspiration of his sister. 112. To what does 'thus' refer? **115. dearest Friend.** Dorothy Wordsworth, who devoted her whole life to helping and inspiring her brother. She was herself a woman of fine intellect and real poetic insight. **121–134. and this . . . blessings.** What blessings does the poet feel that nature is able to confer, and against what can she make us proof?

134–159. 134. **Therefore.** What thoughts does this word recall? **137–139. in after years . . . pleasure.** Describe Wordsworth's sister in the light of these lines, and of ll. 116–119. **140. mansion,** in its radical sense (Lat. *manēre*). **148–149. gleams Of past existence,** *i.e.* the poet's own former existence: see ll. 116–120. **149–159. wilt . . . sake.** Note the peaceful conclusion. In this respect *cf. Lyc.* (186–193) and note.

ODE ON INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

This poem, in many respects the greatest of English odes, was written, partly in 1803 and partly in 1806, during Wordsworth's residence at Grasmere. The difficulty of the poem is in part due to profundity, but more to the fact that it is the record of experiences and reasonings shared by few besides the writer himself. In speaking of this poem, Wordsworth says: "Nothing was more difficult for me in childhood than to admit the notion of death as a state applicable to my own being. I used to brood over the stories of Enoch and Elijah, and almost persuade myself that, whatever might become of others, I should be translated in something of the same way to heaven. . . . With a feeling congenial to this, I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in, my own immaterial nature.

Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or a tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality."

The poet then takes this feeling of his childhood, which he professes to believe all other children share, as a proof, or at least as 'intimation,' of an eternity of the soul's existence, not only beyond this life, but also previous to its so-called "birth" into this earthly phase of its being. The soul which enters the body of the babe has come direct from heaven; it remembers its former home; and this accounts, according to Wordsworth, for the child's instinctive attitude toward nature, — the handiwork of God. The soul, moreover, after its earthly existence, is destined to go back to that heaven whence it came; and thus is explained the poet's early instinctive attitude toward death.

I. What two experiences are suggested in this stanza? **4. celestial light,** because the soul was fresh from God.

II. Show the relation between this stanza and the latter half of Stanza I. **16. glorious birth.** What does this mean as applied to the sunshine? **18. there hath passed.** What is this glory that has passed away?

III. A stanza in which the poet proceeds upon the theory that he has only *imagined* the loss recited in Stanza II. In this stanza and the first fourteen lines of the next he tries to convince himself that nature means the same to him as she has always meant; that he understands and appreciates her as fully as he has ever done. **22. a thought of grief.** Expressed in ll. 9 and 17–18. **23. timely utterance.** This 'utterance' is found in ll. 24–51. **24. I again am strong,** *i.e.* I am determined to convince myself that I am strong. **25. The . . . steep.** Explain this fine line, showing its effect upon the poet's fresh determination. **28–36. The Winds . . . boy.** Discuss the metrical effect of these lines. Note how they rise to a metrical climax coincident with the course of the poet's endeavor to persuade himself that nature is still to him what she used to be. What is meant by the 'fields of sleep,' l. 28?

IV. What does the poet continue to do in the first half of this stanza? See note on Stanza III; but observe that the very repetitions found in ll. 24, 26, 40–41, 42, and 51 indicate that he is more than half-conscious of the futility of his attempt to convince himself. **51. I hear, I hear, with joy I hear.** But just as he reaches this second climax of an attempt that he knows is in defiance of his better wisdom, his eye happens to rest on a specific tree, a field, a pansy. **52–58. But . . . dream.** The moment of disillusion. While talking of nature in general he has been able to keep up his self-deception; but as soon as he looks upon this and the other definite object that his eyes have beheld in childhood, he is forced to admit that his 'timely utterance' has been in vain; that now he sees no longer with the direct vision of childhood, but as "through a glass, darkly." **57. visionary gleam.** Does this refer to ll. 24–50 or to the visions of youth, which now are gone? Discuss. **58. the glory and the dream.** Discuss as above. Also decide whether 'glory' and 'dream' refer to the same or to different things.

[Thus far the poet had presented his problem : What has become of the experiences of my childhood ? Why have they passed from me ? The student must bear in mind that at this point the poem was laid aside for over two years. The added stanzas present a solution of the problem stated in the preceding stanzas. Re-read the introduction to these notes, and endeavor to comprehend the very explicit title of the poem, *Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood.*]

V. Here is pictured the gradual fading of the glories, the disappearance of which had been lamented in the earlier portion of the poem. **59. Our . . . forgetting.** The philosophy of the poem is succinctly stated in this line ; but ' birth ' must be understood, not as the moment of entering this world, but as the whole process of becoming " of the world " — the development from our physical birth to our maturity. The rest of the stanza is but an expansion, in detail, of its first line. **60. our life's Star.** Why is our soul thus designated ? **67–77. Heaven . . . day.** Note the four stages of our development, and the gradual disappearance of the ' clouds of glory.' Discuss, in this and the other stanzas, the fitness of the poetic figures, and determine their kinds. The student of poetic discrimination will find here and elsewhere in the ode noble examples of the " touchstone " or inevitable line. Discover and discuss : see INTRODUCTION, § 34.

VI. A hint at an explanation of how we have come to throw away so precious an inheritance. But Earth does not act thus through carelessness, or through a wilful desire to thwart our highest happiness. She knows nothing of these visions, *can* know nothing of them ; and so, after her own standards of happiness, blunderingly, yet not without tenderness, she tries to give pleasure to the child intrusted to her care.

VII. Simply an expansion of Stanza VI. Earth's method of weaning her foster-child from his divine inheritance is by interesting him in phases of her own existence. By imitating these, he inevitably grows into and becomes a part of the world and its conventionalities. **87. A six years' Darling.** Wordsworth took as the model for the pictures of this stanza Hartley Coleridge, the little son of his friend, the poet. **pigmy.** Look up derivation. **91–108. See . . . imitation.** Is it true that we tend to become that which we imitate ; and, if so, what bearing does this fact have upon the problem of the poem ? **104. " humorous stage":** " stage on which are exhibited the humors of mankind ; that is, according to the Elizabethan sense of the word, their whims, follies, caprices, odd manners " (Hales). *Cf.* Ben Jonson's use of the word in the title, *Every Man in his Humour.*

VIII. Notice to whom the apostrophe of these lines is addressed as indicated in the latter half of the stanza. **109–110. Thou . . . immensity.** How does his ' exterior semblance ' ' belie ' his ' soul's immensity ' ? **111. best Philosopher.** In what sense is he this ? **112. heritage.** What is the heritage which he still keeps ? **Eye among the blind.** Explain. **113. deaf and silent.** Give the syntax and the significance of these words. **114. Haunted.** What does this modify ? **113–114. eternal deep . . . eternal**

mind. What is meant by these? **116. do rest.** Note the force of this. To him a heritage of eternal truth has descended, which, when lost, no lifetime of thought or labor can replace. Why, then (124–129), is he so willing to give up this birthright for the " mess of pottage " which the world offers? **118. lost.** What does this modify? **of the grave,** *i.e.* total or absolute darkness. **120. Broods . . . Slave.** Explain the simile and the metaphor. **124. provoke,** in its radical sense (Lat. *pro,* forth + *vocare,* to call).

IX. Note again the title of the poem, since the title expresses that for which this stanza is a song of thankfulness. The poet has, it is true, forever lost ' the glory and the dream ' of his childhood ; but in the *recollection* that this glory had once been his, he has attained to a truth far more precious than the unreasoning possession of his former memories, heaven-derived though they were. He has learned that truth possesses value just in proportion as it is worked out through reason ; that this is *growth,* and growth is what makes life worth living. **130. embers,** our adult years. **136. most worthy.** Not a superlative here. It means very worthy ; worthy enough in its way. **142–143. obstinate questionings Of sense** : see introduction to these notes, where the poet tells his own experience. **147. High instincts.** Show how these also are ' intimations of immortality.' **152. the fountain light of all our day.** In what sense? **154–156. make . . . Silence,** ' to make our noisy years ' (why ' noisy ' ?) seem only moments when compared with the eternal life of the soul — thus tending to prove immortality. **162–168. Hence . . . evermore.** Hence in these, our later years, though the visions of our childhood are gone forever, our souls, by reasonings based on memories of the former existence of those visions, ' have sight of that immortal sea which brought us hither.' As far as the argument is concerned, this may be regarded as the end of the poem.

X. Observe the return to the theme of the opening stanzas. Note the firmer and surer tone now that all temptation toward self-delusion has passed. The poet can afford now to admit his loss, since he has found for it rich compensation. Indeed, it is really no loss ; for ' What has been must ever be ' is the lesson of the ' years that bring the philosophic mind.'

XI. Still in reference to the opening stanzas, showing the poet's attitude toward nature in his later life. Note the tone of quiet reflection, marking the end of the spiritual struggle and suggested by the smooth pentameter line. How does the metre of this stanza compare with that of preceding stanzas? Look up, in the INTRODUCTION to this book (§§ 25; 30, 2), the subject of the ode. **190. Yet,** even now, as truly as before. **191–192. delight . . . sway.** What ' delight ' does he mean, and in what sense has he come under a ' more habitual sway ' ? **200. race,** contest on the race course ; against what, and what palms of victory has he won? **201–204. Thanks . . . tears.** Note the gentle cadence of the verses with which this true poet and lover of nature in its deeper and holier meanings brings this poem of stress to a close. The last two lines are an example of the poetic touchstone, to be carefully considered and never forgotten. See INTRODUCTION, § 34.

MY HEART LEAPS UP WHEN I BEHOLD

Written at Grasmere, 1802, about a year before the *Ode* was begun. Wordsworth prefixed the last three lines to the *Ode* as a sort of motto : explain the relation in ideas. Here the poet expresses the wish that he may never lose the feeling of reverent exaltation (= ' natural piety ' in the last line) with which he has always witnessed the beauty and grandeur of nature.

THE SOLITARY REAPER

Not a record of actual experience, but suggested by something the poet had read ; classified with the poems of 1803. **16. Hebrides** : a group of islands west of Scotland, noted for picturesque scenery. Can you see in these lines the Wordsworth of *Tintern Abbey* and the *Ode?* Can you detect any ' Coleridgean ' lines ? By what art does Wordsworth render this simple scene very beautiful, very significant ?

I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD

Written at Grasmere, 1804. Wordsworth's note to the poem is as follows : " The daffodils grew and still grow on the margin of Ullswater, and probably may be seen to this day as beautiful in the month of March, nodding their golden heads beside the dancing and foaming waves." For the idea of the last stanza see *Tintern Abbey*, ll. 23–49. Lines 21–22 were composed by Wordsworth's wife ; he thought they were the best in the poem.

THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN

Written in 1797. " This arose out of my observation of the affecting music of these birds hanging in this way in the London streets during the freshness and stillness of the spring morning." The mention of Cheapside in l. 8, one of the oldest and most important thoroughfares of London, shows that of the four Wood streets in London that in question runs south into Cheapside a little less than half way from St. Paul's Cathedral to the Bank of England. Lothbury runs in back of the Bank, and its extension, Gresham Street, crosses Wood Street.

SONNETS

See the previous discussions of the form and history of the sonnet in the INTRODUCTION, §§ **26**; **30**, 6, in the account of sixteenth-century poetry, and in the notes on the sonnet under Milton.

The first place among English sonnet writers may safely be assigned to Wordsworth. Not only has he surpassed others in the number which he has written — between four and five hundred — but he has also produced some which have rarely, if ever, been excelled. During the eighteenth century the sonnet had been almost altogether neglected, and it is largely to Wordsworth that its rehabilitation is due.

London, 1802

This sonnet on Milton was named (as was often the practice of Wordsworth) from the place and time of its composition. In dignity of expression it is not unlike some of the best sonnets of Milton himself. The octave expresses a dissatisfaction with the condition of England, to which Wordsworth frequently gave utterance. The sestet evidences a fine appreciation of the solitary grandeur and the steadfast devotion to duty which constitute the personality of Milton.

Composed upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802

In this sonnet the poet treats of the great city almost as if it were an object of nature. The octave is made up of a simple objective description of the scene before him. The sestet is more subjective, giving the mood arising from this survey. Where is the theme of this sonnet first announced or suggested? What attributes of the scene before the poet most strongly move him? What emotions are raised and developed in the sonnet, and where is the climax of emotion? What is the 'heart' in l. 14?

It is a Beauteous Evening, Calm and Free

Wordsworth says of this sonnet that it was "composed upon the beach near Calais in the autumn of 1802." It is certainly in some respects one of the finest he ever wrote. The octave is descriptive; the sestet brings in the human element. Point out the biblical allusions and show their application. Compare l. 14 with l. 67 of the *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality*, and from this starting-point compare the sestet with the similar thought developed in the *Ode*.

The World is Too Much with Us

This sonnet, written in 1806, is in many respects an echo of *Tintern Abbey*, in which we find its heart-sick weariness with the 'fretful stir unprofitable, and the fever of the world.' It will be noted that there is here a less distinct separation between octave and sestet than in the other sonnets. In the octave the poet shows how we have wantonly put ourselves out of harmony with nature. In the sestet he suggests a superior excellence in the simple creed of the Greeks. What are the meaning and the syntax of 'sordid boon' (4)? Explain the figures of speech in this sonnet, and classify them. For 'Proteus' and 'Triton' (13 and 14), see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 56. Whether Wordsworth really means what he says in ll. 9–10 is worth consideration.

COLERIDGE

THE ANCIENT MARINER

Both Coleridge and Wordsworth have left circumstantial accounts of the origin of *The Ancient Mariner* and the general plan of the *Lyrical*

Ballads, in which the poem first appeared. The importance of Coleridge's poem and of the *Lyrical Ballads* as a whole justifies a somewhat extended quotation from each poet.

In his *Biographia Literaria* Coleridge says : " During the first year that Mr. Wordsworth and I were neighbors, our conversations turned frequently on the two cardinal points of poetry : the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature, and the power of giving the interest of novelty by the modifying colors of imagination. The sudden charm which accidents of light and shade, which moonlight or sunset diffused over a known and familiar landscape, appeared to represent the practicability of combining both. These are the poetry of nature. The thought suggested itself (to which of us I do not recollect) that a series of poems might be composed of two sorts. In the one, the incidents and agents were to be in part, at least, supernatural ; and the excellence aimed at was to consist in the interesting of the affections by the dramatic truth of such emotions as would naturally accompany such situations, supposing them real. And real in this sense they have been to every human being, who, from whatever source of delusion, has at any time believed himself under supernatural agency. For the second class, subjects were to be chosen from ordinary life ; the characters and incidents were to be such as will be found in every village and its vicinity where there is a meditative and feeling mind to seek after them, or to notice them when they present themselves.

" In this idea originated the plan of the *Lyrical Ballads*, in which it was agreed that my endeavors should be directed to persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic ; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth, sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief, for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith. . . . With this view I wrote *The Ancient Mariner*."

Of *The Ancient Mariner* Wordsworth has said : " In reference to this poem I will here mention one of the most noticeable facts in my own poetic history and that of Mr. Coleridge. In the autumn of 1797, he, my sister, and myself started from Alfoxden pretty late in the afternoon, with a view to visit Lintoun and the Valley of Stones near to it ; and as our united funds were very small, we agreed to defray the expense of the tour by writing a poem to be sent to the *New Monthly Magazine* set up by Phillips the bookseller, and edited by Dr. Aiken. Accordingly, we set off, and proceeded along the Quantock Hills toward Watchet, and in the course of this walk was planned the poem of *The Ancient Mariner*, founded on a dream, as Mr. Coleridge said, of his friend Mr. Cruikshank. Much the greatest part of the story was Mr. Coleridge's invention; but certain parts I suggested; for example, some crime was to be committed which should bring upon the Old Navigator, as Coleridge afterwards delighted to call him, the spectral persecution, as a consequence of that crime and his own wanderings. I had been reading in Shelvocke's *Voyages* a day or two before, that, while doubling Cape Horn

they frequently saw Albatrosses in that latitude, the largest sort of sea-fowl, some extending their wings twelve or thirteen feet. 'Suppose,' said I, 'you represent him as having killed one of these birds on entering the South Sea, and that the tutelary spirits of these regions take upon them to avenge the crime.' The incident was thought fit for the purpose, and adopted accordingly. I also suggested the navigation of the ship by the dead men, but do not recollect that I had anything more to do with the scheme of the poem. The gloss with which it was subsequently accompanied was not thought of by either of us at the time, at least not a hint of it was given to me, and I have no doubt it was a gratuitous afterthought. We began the composition together, on that to me memorable evening; I furnished two or three lines at the beginning of the poem, in particular: —

"'And listens like a three years' child:
The Mariner hath his will.'

These trifling contributions, all but one, which Mr. C. has with unnecessary scrupulosity recorded, slipped out of his mind, as well they might. As we endeavored to proceed conjointly (I speak of the same evening), our respective manners proved so widely different that it would have been quite presumptuous in me to do anything but separate from an undertaking upon which I could only have been a clog."

The poem, thus begun in the middle of November, 1797, was not finished until the end of the following March. It seems to have outgrown the proportions it was originally designed to possess; and, instead of appearing in the magazine for which it was at first intended, it formed an important part of the *Lyrical Ballads* — published in the summer of 1798. It proved a very great puzzle to contemporary critics, and the reviews of it were unsparing of condemnation. Wordsworth ascribed the failure of the *Lyrical Ballads* to the insertion of the unlucky poem, and Coleridge even proposed to withdraw it from publication. All of which merely goes to prove that a poet may be without honor among his own people.

"The versification," as Wordsworth has remarked, "is harmonious and exquisitely varied, exhibiting the utmost powers of the ballad metre and every variety of which it is capable." (See INTRODUCTION, §§ 24, 3; 31, 3.) To appreciate the harmony and melody of the verse, we need only compare it with any of the old English ballads of similar, but less consciously artistic, form. The normal stanza has four verses of alternating iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter. The trimeter lines are rhymed; the tetrameter lines usually not so, though the absence of rhyme in these lines is generally compensated for by an internal rhyme in one or both. In some instances the normal stanza is enlarged to a stanza of five, six, or even nine lines — and always with a distinct heightening of poetic effect.

PART I. **1–20. 2. one of three**: see ll. 588–590. **3–8. By . . . din.** Observe that the guest has at first no idea of delaying. Trace and explain in detail the several steps by which we see him pass entirely into the mariner's

power. **11. loon**, a good-for-nothing fellow. **12. Eftsoons**, at once ; an archaic word to lend color to the poem. Find similar archaic expressions. **15–16. and listens . . . will** : see Wordsworth's account of the poem in introduction to these notes.

21–40. Observe the two parts of this division. How does the background of the wedding feast add to the æsthetic effect ? **22–24. drop . . . top**, evidently dropping below the horizon, and, hence, first losing sight of the objects nearest sea-level. The lighthouse seems to be *on* the hill. Note the order in which he sees these objects on returning, ll. 464–467. **25. sun . . . left.** In what direction were they going ? **37–40. The . . . . Mariner.** Observe that every line of this stanza is a repetition of a preceding line. This tendency to repetition is often seen in ballads. On the refrain, see INTRODUCTION, § 23, 4 ; on the Ballad in general, § 31, 3.

41–62. 45–50. **With . . . fled.** Show in detail the points of likeness in this comparison of the ship to one ' who pursued . . . still treads,' etc. **51–54. And now . . . emerald.** Where was the ship at this time ? Notice throughout these stanzas the beauty, simplicity, and strength of the poet's descriptions. Not a word too much or too little ; it is all a clear-cut, distinct picture. **55–62. And . . . swound.** Describe this scene and show its probable effect on the sailors. **62. swound** : see note on l. 12.

63–82. 63. **Albatross.** What is the derivation of this word ? **67. eat**, the obsolete participle. **71. And . . . behind.** In what direction were they going now ? **76. vespers nine**, *i.e.* for nine evenings. See derivation of ' vespers.' Show how the action of the mariner is made more revolting by the greeting accorded to the albatross (65–66) and its fondness for the crew (73–74). Why, then, did he kill the bird ? Does this offence merit the punishment which follows ?

PART II. **83–106. 83–86. The Sun . . . sea.** *Cf.* ll. 25–28. **98. uprist**, an obsolete form. **106.** A much travelled correspondent suggests that, although Coleridge's marginal gloss specifies the Pacific Ocean, the poet had in mind descriptions of the Sargasso Sea, the centre of the great Atlantic eddy, which more fittingly justifies his portrayal of the " silent sea " and his geography of the return voyage (Parts V, VI).

107–130. A tropical calm. **109. to break.** Does this infinitive express purpose or result ? **111–112. hot, copper, bloody.** Justify the use of these adjectives. **113. Right . . stand.** What does this show as to the location of this scene ? **115; 119. Day . . . day ; Water . . . water.** Show the effect of these repetitions as picturing the mood of the mariner. **120. And**, *i.e.* and yet, in spite of the water. **123–126. The . . . sea.** What is the mariner's attitude toward nature in these lines ? Show in this and succeeding stanzas the evidence of approaching delirium. Discuss this distress in the light of Nemesis (*Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 38). **128. death-fires**, mysterious lights, sometimes called corpse candles, supposed to be seen over dead bodies, or to foreshadow the death of him who sees them. What was probably the real cause of the phenomenon ? **129. witch's oils.** Why does the mariner use this comparison ? **130. blue.** Syntax ?

131–142. **132. the Spirit** : see the marginal gloss, and *cf.* ll. 402–405. **133. fathom.** Syntax? **139. well-a-day** : see note on *Eve of St. Agnes*, III. **141–142. Instead . . . hung.** Consider whether this is to be taken literally or figuratively. Observe that the albatross is the sign of the mariner's sin ; while his religion taught that the cross was a symbol of *deliverance* from sin. What, then, would this action mean to him ? Note also that each " Part " of the poem except the last ends with an allusion to the albatross, or the crime, or the penance. What is the purpose of this device ?

PART III. Into what two divisions may this part be separated ? Does there seem to be an allegorical meaning in this and succeeding portions of the poem ? Study the poem in the light of the three following views ; show which seems most probable, or whether there is still a fourth interpretation: (1) that the poem is intended to be taken with childish or imaginative faith as you would take any story containing a supernatural element ; (2) that it is to be taken as an allegory, like *Pilgrim's Progress* or the *Faerie Queene ;* (3) that it is to be taken literally, except that Parts III–VI and some parts of II and VII are the ravings of the mariner while in the delirium of fever. Which of these interpretations would make the poem most significant and valuable ?

143–170. **143–146. weary** : see note on ll. 115–119. **152. I wist.** An archaic imperfect of the verb wit. The expression is cognate with ywis or iwis (from A.-S. *gewis*). See *Dict.* and *cf. Horatius* (138). **155. water-sprite.** Sprite is the older form of spirit. **162. With . . . . baked** : see note on ll. 37–40. **164. Gramercy** (Fr. *grand*, great + *merci*, thanks), an expression of joy and thankfulness. **grin.** What gave the sailors this appearance ? *Cf.* with the next two lines.

171–202. **171–176. The . . . Sun.** Describe this picture. **177–184. And . . . gossameres.** Point out the uncanny in the picture, and show the effect on the mariner. **178. Heaven's Mother**, the Virgin Mary. **184. gossameres**, a very filmy kind of cobweb. Look up the derivation. **188. a Death.** How account for the fact that it is the woman, more than the Death, that seems to fill the mariner with horror ? **190–194. Her . . . cold.** Describe the woman, and show the impression she produces. **193. Life-in-Death.** Would Death-in-Life have been a more exact or a more imaginatively suggestive term ? **197. I've won.** In a previous throw of the dice, Death has evidently won the other sailors. In this throw Life-in-Death wins the mariner. How does this correspond with their subsequent adventures ? **199-200. The . . . dark.** So always in the tropics. Notice the fine metaphor in Coleridge's marginal gloss on these lines. **201. whisper.** Describe the effect of this onomatopœia. On the qualities of sound in verse, see INTRODUCTION, § 21, 1–3. The poem is a veritable garner of memory images, poetic figures, and rhetorical devices, and will well repay study from this point of view.

203–223. **203. looked sideways up.** What does this suggest ? **204–**

205. Fear . . . sip. Explain the simile, showing the force of 'sip.' **207. white.** Syntax? **209. clomb**, archaic for climbed. **eastern bar.** Explain. **210–211. The . . . tip.** Show why this position of the star is impossible. How do you account for the fact that the mariner took note of all these details at this terrible moment? **215. cursed.** Why? Was the curse just? **223. Like . . . bow**: see note on ll. 141–142. Explain fully why the mariner was fated to live while his comrades all died. An interesting discussion of this question may be found in George Macdonald's *David Elginbrod*, chap. v.

PART IV. Designate the shifts of scenes that occur in this part.

224–262. 226–227. And . . . sand. These lines were contributed by Wordsworth. Describe the picture. What does l. 227 modify? **232–235. Alone . . . agony**: see note on ll. 115–119. Show that this loneliness was spiritual as well as physical. **236–239. The . . . I.** Can you explain this mood, where death is beautiful and life terrible? **245. or ever**, before ever. **gusht.** In what respect does the choice of this word excel? **246. wicked whisper.** What was this whisper and what did it say? Why could the mariner not pray? Observe that this is the climax of his hardness of heart, his rebellion against Providence, his hatred of God's creatures. **253–262. The cold . . . not die.** Discuss these stanzas as the climax of the mariner's penance and suffering. **255. The look**: see l. 215. **262. could not die**: see note on l. 197.

263–291. Contrast as to pictures and mood these stanzas with those preceding. Read Coleridge's marginal gloss as a help in explaining the change which is coming over the spirit of the mariner. **263–266. The . . . beside.** Indicate the beauties of versification and imagery in this stanza. Observe that the mariner is at last awakened to an interest outside himself and his own sufferings: *cf. Prisoner of Chillon* (251–258). **267–281. Her beams . . . fire.** Note the images of color in these stanzas, and show how they contribute to the poetic impression. **267. bemocked . . . main.** Explain. **268. spread.** Syntax? **270–271. The . . . red**: *cf.* with ll. 129–130, showing the difference in the effects produced upon the mariner. **287. I blessed them unaware.** This may be taken as the climax of the story. The mariner no longer rebels; his heart has softened. The cruelty which prompted, the disregard of life which permitted, the killing of the albatross, are replaced by spontaneous love of the lowly creatures of the sea. **288–291. The . . . sea**: see note on ll. 141–142, regarding the significance of the release from the albatross. Why is the mariner now able to pray?

PART V. What time elapses in this part? How is the action divided, and what shifts of scene are included?

292–308. 292. Oh sleep! Consult INTRODUCTION, § 21, 1, on the qualities of the sounds in this passage. *Cf.* Coleridge's invocation to sleep with those of Shakespeare in *Second Part of Henry IV*, III, 1; *Macbeth*, II, 2; and *Julius Cæsar*, IV, 3 (last part). **294. Mary Queen**: *cf.* l. 178. **296. slid.** Point out the force of this word. **297. silly.** Some take this to mean blessed or happy (since now filled with water): see derivation of

'silly'; while some define it as foolish or useless (since they had so long been empty). Decide. **305. could not feel.** Why this lightness?

309–344. 309. roaring wind. What was there supernatural about the 'wind'? **317. wan . . . stars.** Why 'wan'? **325–326. The lightning . . . wide**, now evidently "sheet lightning," rather than "chain lightning," as in l. 314. **331. They . . . uprose**: see Wordsworth's remarks at the beginning of notes to this poem. Discuss 'sere,' l. 312; 'fire-flags sheen,' l. 314; 'had,' l. 333; 'lifeless tools,' l. 339.

345–382. 345. I fear thee. Why? **349. troop of spirits.** Comment upon the significance of this spiritual aid. **358–372. Sometimes . . . tune.** These stanzas, especially the last, may be considered among the most melodious in English poetry. The student should point out words which are especially musical and lines that appear to be inevitably artistic. It is to lines like these that Swinburne refers when he says, "Of Coleridge's best verses I venture to affirm that the world has nothing like them, and can never have." **358. a-dropping.** Give meaning and syntax. **366. That makes . . . mute.** Explain. **379. The spirit slid**: see ll. 131–134. Is there any change in the spirit's attitude toward the mariner, and, if so, why? **382. the ship stood still.** The ship has now reached the equator, beyond which point the spirit of the south has not the power to go. The gloss to this stanza seems to be inconsistent with the gloss to ll. 103–106. Does this inconsistency extend to the poem, and, if so, is there any way in which the contradiction can be reconciled?

383–409. 386. a short uneasy motion. The Polar spirit, though unable to cross the 'line,' still endeavors to keep his hold upon the ship. The guardian saint (see l. 286 and the gloss to ll. 345–349) seeks to set it free; hence this 'motion.' **394. I have not to**, *i.e.* am not able to. **395. living life.** Show what this means, and how the voices of l. 397 are supposed to be 'heard' by the unconscious mariner. **399. By . . . cross**, a common ballad oath. **404–405. He . . . bow.** These lines well express the sin of cruelty and ingratitude for which the mariner is suffering. **406. softer voice.** The 'first voice' seems to be that of Justice, "Sin must be punished." The 'second voice' is that of Mercy, "Sin may be pardoned." With this idea *cf.* Portia's speech in *Merchant of Venice*, IV, 1, 177–195.

PART VI. The forward movement in this part may be considered in respect of the following: (1) the ship's progress and the shifting scenes; (2) the change in the apparent physical condition of the mariner; (3) the progress in expiation of his crime; (4) the waning of the supernatural and the return to the natural. Exemplify.

410–429. 414. Still . . . lord. Explain the figure and show its fitness as here used. **416. great bright eye.** What gave the ocean this appearance? **418. If . . . go.** Supply the infinitive of which this line is the object. **419. guides.** How? **422. so fast**: see marginal gloss.

430–451. 433. The dead men stood together. This is evidently the last penance to be undergone on board the ship. Show why it was imposed,

and compare its effect with that of ll. 255–262. **435. fitter.** Modifies what? **442. spell,** which had held his gaze. **444. little saw.** Why? **446–451. Like . . . tread.** Analyze the figure in detail. What in the mariner's experience corresponds to 'road,' 'turned round,' 'fiend,' etc.?

452–483. **452. wind.** Compare, in various respects, with the wind of l. 309. **457. Like . . . spring,** thus bringing up images of home. *Cf.* 'welcoming' (459). **458. It . . . fears.** Explain. **463. On . . . blew.** Significance of this? **465–466. The . . . kirk** : see ll. 22–24 and note. **467. countree** : see note on l. 12. **470–471. O . . . alway.** What is implied by this prayer? **475. shadow of the Moon.** What does this mean? **479. steady weathercock.** Explain, showing force of the adjective. Name some other moonlight scenes of the poem. **482–483. Full . . . came.** Describe. See marginal gloss.

484–513. **489. by the holy rood,** the Cross, an oath frequent in ballads : *cf.* l. 399. **494. They stood as signals.** Observe that here, as in ll. 335–349, the angelic spirits appear in order to *aid* the mariner. **512. shrieve,** an obsolete form of shrive, to absolve from guilt or sin ; here, from the blood-guiltiness of the albatross's death. See note on ll. 141–142.

PART VII. Designate the successive topics in this part.

514–555. **517. marineres** : see note on l. 12. **525. those lights** : *cf.* ll. 494–495. **526. That,** subject of 'made.' **530. sere** : *cf.* l. 312. **533–534. Brown . . . along.** Describe the picture. **537. That . . . young.** What does the clause modify? **549. The ship went down like lead.** Thus the poet suddenly transports us "from the land of mystery to that of human reality," from the supernatural to the natural world. The mariner has been undergoing punishment for guilt ; has been passing through a fearful experience for his spiritual salvation. The ship has been the stage on which these scenes have been enacted, and when it has served its purpose it disappears from human sight. This disappearance not only hides the mystery of the dead, but breaks the only material link that binds the mariner to his dreadful past.

556–581. **558–559. save . . . sound.** Explain. **560–565. the Pilot . . . crazy go.** The terrifying appearance of the mariner is here in evidence. Why is the Hermit less affected than the rest? "No man liveth to himself alone" — this seems to be the poet's thought. The mariner has done penance, but the consequences of his sin have altered his relation to his fellow-men. **565. now.** When? **581. And . . . free.** Explain.

582–625. **586. like night.** Comment upon the simile. **588–590. That . . . teach** : *cf.* ll. 2 and 18, and show on what basis the mariner selects his hearers. What does this suggest as to the Wedding-Guest? **591. What loud uproar.** What is the æsthetic value of this reference to the wedding? **595–596. And hark . . . prayer.** What is the significance of these lines? *Cf.* ll. 601–617. **598. Alone . . . sea** : *cf.* ll. 232–235 and note. **603. To walk.** Syntax? **612–617. He . . . all,** the moral of the poem. Coleridge once said he feared he had obtruded it too openly on the reader. Do you

agree? **618–625. The Mariner . . . morn.** Describe the mood with which the poem ends. **620–621. Wedding-Guest turned.** Why? **622. forlorn,** an archaic passive participle, meaning bereft. **624. sadder.** What does the word mean here? What lesson has the Wedding-Guest learned?

KUBLA KHAN

This poem was written, probably, in 1798. The poet had fallen asleep just as he was reading the following sentence in *Purchas his Pilgrimage* (a book of travel published 1613): "In Xamdu did Cublai Can build a stately Palace, encompassing sixteen miles of plain ground with a wall, wherein are fertile meadows, pleasant springs, delightful streams, and all sorts of beasts of chase and game, and in the midst thereof a sumptuous house of pleasure." The sentence was elaborated in a marvellous dream during which Coleridge without the slightest effort composed some two or three hundred lines. On awaking he began to write down the poem, but unfortunately was interrupted and was unable later to remember the rest of the lines. Thus was written the fragment, *Kubla Khan*, — a striking example of the imaginative and emotional elaboration of a theme, and one of the most romantic and strangely beautiful of poems. Kubla Khan was a great Mogul conqueror of the thirteenth century; his empire was the most extensive ever set up in Asia, reaching from the Pacific to the Black Sea and almost to the Mediterranean.

SOUTHEY

THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM

At Blenheim (pronounced in English 'blen'im'), a village in western Bavaria, on the Danube, the English, Germans, Dutch, and Danes (52,000), under the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene of Savoy, defeated the French and Bavarians (55,000–60,000), under Tallard. The loss of the English and their allies was 11,000–12,000; of the French and Bavarians, 40,000 (?). This, in 1704, was one of the battles of the war of the Spanish Succession.

LAMB

THE OLD FAMILIAR FACES

This poem was written in January, 1798, after Mary Lamb in a fit of insanity had killed her mother and while Mary was in the asylum (*cf.* l. 20, "And some are taken from me"). In its first form there was an opening stanza referring to the death of his mother. The 'friend' of the fourth stanza, with whom Lamb had quarrelled, was probably Charles Lloyd, a meditative young man, formerly a disciple of Coleridge. The quarrel was of brief duration. The 'Friend' of the sixth stanza was Coleridge.

BYRON

THE PRISONER OF CHILLON

The Prisoner of Chillon was written in Switzerland, June, 1816, shortly after Byron had left England for the last time. The poet, who, with Shelley, was sailing on Lake Geneva, had been deeply impressed with the castle of Chillon, its romantic history, its picturesque situation on the northern shore of the beautiful lake, its massive walls and gloomy dungeons. He had also heard, in a general way, of Bonnivard, a political prisoner, who had occupied a cell in the castle nearly three hundred years before. He wrote the poem during a two days' detention by storms, at a village on the shore of the lake.

In a prefatory note, Byron says, "When this poem was composed, I was not sufficiently aware of the history of Bonnivard, or I should have endeavored to dignify the subject by an attempt to celebrate his courage and his virtues." On the whole, we may be glad that he did not know more fully the story of the actual prisoner of Chillon, since in simplicity, vigor of treatment, impressiveness, and hold upon the sympathy of the reader, the poem, just as it is, leaves little to be desired.

I. Indicate the topic of this and of each succeeding division in its turn. **2–3. Nor . . . night.** Observe the dimeter lines. Describe the versification of the poem. What other poems of this book have similar rhyme and metre? (See INTRODUCTION.) **6. vile repose.** Meaning? **7. spoil.** In what sense? **10. banned,** shut off or denied. Discriminate between 'banned' and 'barred.' **14. For,** on account of. **tenets.** See *Dict.* **17. were . . . are.** Note the contrast. **26. this wreck.** Meaning?

II. Indicate topic as before. **27. Gothic mould,** Gothic form of architecture. What are some of its characteristics as compared with Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, Roman, Byzantine? **29. massy,** massive. **35. marsh's meteor lamp,** the will o' the wisp. See note on *L'Alleg.* (104). **41. this new day.** When will he be 'done' with it? **42. painful.** Why? **47. lay living.** The poem is notable for its alliterations. Point them out as they occur, showing effect of each, *i.e.* fitness, beauty, or the opposite. What instances so far?

III. Topic? **48. column stone.** What is meant? **49. each alone.** Meaning? **52. But,** except. **57. pure elements of earth,** such as light, sunshine, wholesome air, etc. **63. dreary.** Show how the sound of this word suggests its meaning — a kind of onomatopœia.

IV. **71. ought.** What tense? **72. in his degree.** Meaning? **78. such bird in such a nest.** Kind and fitness of the figure? **80–81. When . . . free.** Meaning? **82. polar day.** What is the point of this comparison? Near the poles the day lasts the whole season. **84. sleepless summer . . . long light.** Note the double alliteration in the same line. *Cf.* l. 10. **85. offspring.** Explain the figure. **86–91. And thus . . . below.** What are the characteristics of this younger brother?

V. Characterize the second brother. **95. had stood**, would have stood. **101. forced it on**, made *my* spirit keep up. **102. Those relics**, the two brothers were all that were left, hence 'relics.' **105. gulf**, an abyss in which he was overwhelmed.

VI. Remember to indicate the topic of each division of the poem. **107. Lake Leman**, from the Latin, *Lacus Lemannus*, as used in Cæsar's *Commentaries*, I, 8. **108. A thousand feet.** Below the castle the lake has been fathomed and proved to be nearly one thousand feet deep. **112. enthralls**, to enslave or hold captive; thus the wave (or lake) surrounds the battlements of the castle and holds it captive. **114. living grave.** Explain. **122. rock, rocked.** These words are of entirely different derivation. Look them up.

VII. **126. nearer.** In what sense? **135. years.** Syntax? **136. pent**, penned or confined. **150–151. And . . . cave.** Why especially pitiful? **154. foolish thought.** Why foolish? **160. earth.** Syntax? **163. murder's fitting monument.** How is the chain a fitting monument?

VIII. **167. race.** Meaning? **173. natural or inspired.** What distinction between these two words? **175. was withered.** Explain why passive voice. **184. horrors . . . woe.** Discriminate between these words. **189. those.** Why plural, when there was but one? **193. departing rainbow's ray.** Show the fitness of the figure. **198. better days.** When? **205–211. I . . . him.** Compare the emotions of the prisoner with those which he felt when the other brother died. **212–213.** Why is 'I' italicized? **214. dungeon-dew.** Meaning? **226. ne'er be so.** What is meant? **229. faith.** This evidently means religion, which forbade suicide (a selfish death). But why is it called an 'earthly' hope?

IX. Describe in detail the mental condition of the prisoner as shown here. This is often called the best division of the poem. Why? **233–236. First . . . stone.** Discuss. **237. wist**, knew. **243. vacancy absorbing space.** What does the poet seem to mean? **245–246. no stars . . . crime.** What does each pair of words add in describing his condition? Try to get a definite idea of these lines and, indeed, of each line of the division, as they all demand close thought.

X. Show what the bird did toward bringing the prisoner back to light and life. **257–258. And they . . . misery**, *i.e.* he forgot, for the moment, his sad condition. **262. Close slowly round me.** What does this mean? **269. a thousand things.** Discuss. **274. not half so desolate**, else it could not have sung so sweetly. **277. dungeon's brink**, the verge, or window ledge of the dungeon. **283. in winged guise**, in the form of a bird. **293–299. Lone . . . gay.** What do you call these figures? Show their force and fitness, and the extreme beauty of the details of the second one. **297. a frown.** Explain the figure.

XI, XII. Topic of each, as always? **303. inured.** Explain. **308. athwart.** Meaning? **315. profaned**, *i.e.* by stepping on their graves. **319. therefrom**, from or by aid of the footing. **323. wider prison.** Explain and note the pathos of the idea.

XIII. **334. thousand years,** a large definite number for an indefinite — a species of synecdoche. *Cf.* l. 269, and see INTRODUCTION, § 8, on poetic figures. **339. town,** a Swiss village across the lake. **341. a little isle.** Byron has elsewhere spoken of this island, with its ' three tall trees ' — the only island he saw in his voyage around the lake. In what sense did it ' smile ' at the prisoner ? **356. new tears came in my eye.** Describe this mood. **364. oppressed,** by what ?

XIV. Give topic. **369. mote,** the speck (of misery) in his eye that prevented his looking at things around him. **370. At last . . . free.** Explain his lack of interest. **374. love despair.** Describe such a condition of mind. **382. sullen trade.** Explain. **384. feel less than they.** Meaning ? **389. friends.** Why ? Syntax of the word ? **390. communion,** association. **391. even I.** Why does he use the word ' even ' ?

STANZAS FROM CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

These stanzas are inserted merely to serve as an illustration, and to give a slight taste, of the poet's greatest production. Accordingly we shall leave to the student the task, or privilege, of working out for himself the meaning of most of the lines. Attention may well be called, however, to the fine artistic sense which prompted Byron to make use of the Spenserian stanza for his poem. Perhaps nowhere can the stanza be found written with greater strength and dignity. See INTRODUCTION, §§ 19; 24, 5.

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, a poem of four cantos, published at intervals from 1812 to 1818, is an account of Byron's travels, impressions, and sentiments, with many idealized descriptions of impressive scenes. In his Preface to the first and second cantos Byron wrote : " A fictitious character is introduced for the sake of giving some connection to the piece, which, however, makes no pretensions to regularity. It has been suggested to me by friends, on whose opinions I set a high value, that in this fictitious character, " Childe Harold," I may incur the suspicion of having intended some real personage : this I beg leave, once for all, to disclaim. Harold is a child of imagination for the purpose I have stated." ' Childe ' has its middle English meaning, — a noble youth, a squire.

CANTO III, XXI–XXVIII : WATERLOO. When in 1816 Byron exiled himself from England (see introduction to his poems, above), he endeavored to find diversion from the thoughts and memories that tortured him by taking up again the thread of Childe Harold's travels and experiences. From Brussels he visited the field of Waterloo where a few months before (June 18, 1815) the battle that marked the downfall of Napoleon had been fought. The preliminary engagement of Quatre Bras occurred two days before the decisive battle, and it is the eve of Quatre Bras — the ball at Brussels, the midnight alarm, and the rush to arms — that Byron describes in the eight stanzas reproduced in the text. Sir Walter Scott thought them almost unequalled for feeling and vigor. This third canto was completed in Switzerland in 1816. — **8–9.** Note the dramatic contrast between ' marriage

bell' and 'rising (*i.e.* commencing, growing) knell.' 12–15, famous lines. 16. Discuss the force of this line. 20. **Brunswick's fated chieftain.** The Duke of Brunswick was killed at Quatre Bras. 25. **his father,** — who was mortally wounded at the battle of Jena, 1806. 35. **mutual eyes.** Is this a forced use of 'mutual'? See *Dict.* 42. **alarming,** calling to arms. 46–50. The war pibroch (music of the bagpipe) of Lochiel, Chief of the Highland Camerons, which has been heard in Albyn's (Scotland's) hills and in the past by Saxon (English) foes, now resounds at midnight, shrill and savage, in the Belgian field. 51. **fill,** intransitive, "are filled." 53, **memory.** Subject of 'instils.' 54. **Evan's, Donald's.** Sir Evan Cameron, of Lochiel (d. 1719), the most celebrated leader of the Camerons; his grandson, Donald Cameron (d. 1748), called the 'gentle Lochiel.' 55. **Ardennes.** The forest region on the frontier of France and Belgium, distinguished in the annals of many wars, — not least in the World War. 60. **Which now beneath them.** Supply 'grows' from 'shall grow' in the next line: a good example of the condensed style peculiar to this poem. 69. **thunder-clouds,** — of war. — It should be added that previous to the ball Wellington had received word of French operations, that he was not surprised at the ball, and that he had directed his general officers to appear there so that the people of Brussels might have no suspicion of what was imminent. The officers had their orders to leave as quietly as possible at ten o'clock and join their commands.

Canto IV, cxxxix–cxlv : The Coliseum. Although of *Childe Harold* the third Canto is probably the best on the whole, it contains no single groups of stanzas which rank as high as this and the following extract from Canto IV. They were written, presumably at Venice, in 1817. The desolation of ruined Rome and the lessons that it taught appear to have powerfully impressed Byron; so much so, that perhaps nowhere in his poems is he more sincerely and nobly eloquent than here. 1. **nations.** The vast, cosmopolitan audience. The Coliseum is supposed to have seated 40,000–50,000 persons and to have furnished standing room for many thousands more. This great edifice, the largest theatre in the world, was begun A.D. 72 by the emperor Vespasian and completed by his son, the emperor Titus (Titus Flavius Vespasianus), A.D. 80. Originally called the Flavian Amphitheatre, it has been known, since about the beginning of the eighth century, as the Coliseum (or Colosseum), in reference to its size or to Nero's colossal statue which once stood near by. It was inaugurated by shows lasting one hundred days, in which five thousand animals were killed. 5. **genial.** Define irony! 8. **listed,** enclosed for a contest. 10–27. The reference is to the statue of the Dying Gladiator, so-called, in the Capitoline Museum at Rome, but Byron describes much more than what he saw in the representation by the sculptor — the contemporary scene, the thoughts of the dying Dacian, the present ruin of the stupendous pile, the vanity of imperial glory and of human prophecy. What the sculptor intended does not affect our estimate of Byron's poem; but as a matter of fact the statue itself

probably exhibits not a gladiator who might have fought in the arena of the Coliseum, but a dying warrior — a Gaul recognized by his twisted collar and bristly hair and beard — who has been wounded in the breast and who is seated upon his shield, on which lies his curved battle-horn. 10. Byron is sometimes careless about his metres, but not so often as those who scan by counting syllables imagine. To the finger-test this line may prove irregular. But if the verse is read naturally the rhythm leaps to the ear : it is both unaffected and artistic — " I sée befóre mĕ thĕ Gládĭátor líe. In the third foot an anapæst is substituted for an iamb ; that is not only allowable but singularly suited to the expression of exalted contemplation. Similar artistic effect is achieved in l. 15 by the elocutionary pause [^] before " Fróm " and the succeeding anapæst, " thĕ rĕd gásh," which compensates for the missing light syllable of the first foot. In somewhat the same way the metrical effect of l. 16 is heightened : " Líke thĕ fírst ŏf ă thúndĕr-shówĕr : ănd nów." See INTRODUCTION, § 20, for a discussion of how metres may be skilfully varied. What other examples of apparent irregularity can you find in the text ? Can you justify some or all such cases by artistic design and pleasing effect ? Find illustrative lines. 11–12. **his manly brow**, etc. A famous line, often quoted. Note the masterly condensation of a philosophy of life, — and see INTRODUCTION, § 34. 23. Another famous line. 24. **Dacian.** Dacia, now Roumania. 26. **rushed with his blood.** A forceful figure : These images of his home crowd through his mind while his blood courses through the wound, images and blood rushing to death. 27. Referring to the inroads of the Goths and conceiving the sack of Rome by Alaric in 410 as retaliative. 29. **buzzing nations.** *Cf.* l. 1 ; Byron is not above repeating a favorite phrase. **ways**, aisles and passages. 34. **sounds much.** My one voice seems a loud sound ; note the similar dramatic contrast in l. 36. 38. For a long time the ruins were used as a quarry. 40–45. Viewed from a distance the building seems almost complete and the visitor wonders whence the quarried stone was taken ; but closer examination reveals the ruin. About two-thirds of this gigantic structure have disappeared, but the ruins are still stupendous. 42. **developed**, revealed, disclosed, — in the radical sense ; *cf.* ' envelop ' and see *Dict.* 45. Supply ' that ' after ' all.' 46–54. The Coliseum is most impressive by moonlight ; then the destruction is scarcely visible. 48. **loops**, loopholes. The stars are seen through the ruinous gaps made by ' time.' 51. Julius Cæsar is said to have found a peculiar satisfaction in wearing the crown of laurel, — it hid his baldness ! The shrubs which grew on the ruins are compared to his laurel crown. A far-fetched simile ! What of its propriety ? 53. **raise.** Imperative. Then, by the magic circle of the ruins, raise the dead ! 55–60. This saying of the Anglo-Saxon pilgrims is traceable to a fragment attributed to the Northumberland monk and historian, Bede (d. 735), whom we have mentioned above, at the close of chap. i. 63. Expressive of Byron's embittered spirit ?

CANTO IV, CLXXVIII–CLXXXIV : THE OCEAN. The following lines from

the close of *Childe Harold* are among the most sublime Byron ever wrote. The first stanza, which reminds one of Wordsworth's nature-worship, is particularly well known. **27. lay.** Ungrammatical, for 'lie,' to rhyme with 'bay'; a reckless solecism, which mars for us one of Byron's best lines. But Sir Francis Bacon was capable of using 'lay' intransitively, and other writers before Byron and after have unblushingly sinned in a usage which will not pass muster nowadays. **31. oak leviathans,** warships; *cf.* note on *Paradise Lost* (201). **35. yeast of waves.** The foam of the waves likened to the foam of fermenting yeast. **36. Armada.** The Invincible, or the Spanish, Armada, a great fleet of 129 or more ships sent by Philip II of Spain against England in 1588. It was defeated by the English fleet of about 80 vessels, in the English Channel and Strait of Dover, in August of that year. **spoils of Trafalgar,** the wreckage of the battle of Trafalgar, — the greatest British naval victory of the Napoleonic wars. The battle was fought off Cape Trafalgar, on the southern coast of Spain, Oct. 21, 1805. Nelson, the heroic English commander, was killed, dying on board the Victory. At the beginning of the battle he hoisted the world-famous signal: "England expects that every man will do his duty." **39. washed,** brought.

KNOW YE THE LAND

These are the opening lines of *The Bride of Abydos*, a Turkish story, published in 1813. The description of the spirit of the East is romantic and rather rhetorical, — a good example of Byron's genius in its more imaginative moments. **1. cypress.** Symbolic of death. **myrtle.** Sacred to Venus. The same antithesis is developed in the three following lines. **3. turtle**: turtle-dove. **8. Gûl,** Persian for 'rose.'

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY

One of the songs written for *Hebrew Melodies;* published 1815.

SHELLEY

TO A SKYLARK

This poem was composed near Leghorn, in Italy, in 1820. It is perhaps the most beautiful of Shelley's lyrics, and most typical of the qualities which especially distinguish him. It would be hard to imagine the spirit which animates the song of a bird translated more exquisitely into words. Concerning this lyric Mrs. Shelley has written: "It was on a beautiful summer evening, while wandering near the lanes whose myrtle hedges were the bowers of the fireflies, that we heard the carolling of the skylark which inspired one of the most beautiful of his poems."

1–30. The clear music of the lark as heard by the poet. **1. spirit.** In addressing the bird he appeals to the spirit of music which it embodies. **6–10. Higher . . . singest.** This stanza well illustrates the effect of the

peculiar metre. The first four lines are quick trochaic trimeters, suggestive of the swift upward darting of the bird. The fifth line is iambic hexameter, slow and apparently correspondent to the long and graceful sweep of soaring movement. What is the rhyme system of the poem? **8. Like a cloud of fire.** Discuss the figure. **16–20. The pale . . . delight.** Explain the comparison of 'lark' to 'star.' **22. silver sphere.** Explain. **26–30. All . . . overflowed.** Note the comparison between the moonbeams and the song of the lark. In this poem, as in most of Shelley, every figure will repay careful study.

31–60. A description of the bird by a series of similitudes. **36–40. Like . . . not.** Consider how the lark, like the poet, creates the taste which is to enjoy its song. **55. heavy-winged thieves.** The wings of the wind are heavy from the drowsy perfume of the rose.

61–75. Sources and nature of the song. **61. sprite,** an early form of the word spirit. **66. hymeneal,** from Hymen, god of marriage. See *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 36.

76–105. Details of the lark's superiority to the poet. **81–95. Waking . . . near.** Show the connection and trace the thought of these three stanzas. **90. Our . . . thought.** A fine example of the balanced line, inevitable in thought and expression, a touchstone. INTRODUCTION, § 34. **96–99. Better . . . found.** Shelley himself excelled in these two particulars, — the understanding of metrical effects, and the knowledge and appreciation of poetry ('treasures in books').

THE CLOUD

This lyric also appeared in 1820, though it must have been composed two or three years before, if, as Mrs. Shelley suggests, it was written in England. In speaking of the ode *To a Skylark* and *The Cloud*, she says that in the opinion of many critics they "bear a purer poetical stamp than any of his productions. They were written as his mind prompted, — listening to the carolling of the bird, aloft in the azure sky of Italy, or marking the cloud as it sped across the heavens, while he floated in his boat on the Thames." The cloud itself is supposed to sing.

The metre and rhyme of this poem are characterized by a lightness and airiness of effect especially well suited to the subject. The even-numbered lines are nearly all trimeter, and are rhymed in pairs. The odd-numbered lines are tetrameter, and have only internal rhyme. Though the number of lines in the stanza differs, the stanza is always regularly formed according to the principle shown above. The lightness of movement in the verse is due to the short lines, to the internal rhyme, to the large number of anapæstic substitutions, and to the artistic sequences of vowel and consonant sounds. (See INTRODUCTION, §§ 20, 1; 21; 23, 2.)

1–12. 7. mother's breast. Who is this mother that dances about the sun? Notice each figure of speech in the stanza.

13–30. Discuss the figures. **18. Lightning.** How is Lightning the pilot of the cloud? **28. Spirit . . . remains,** object of 'dream.' **30. Whilst . . . rains.** Explain this line.

31–44. Discuss figures. **31. sanguine,** blood-red, the radical meaning of the word. Derivation? **33. sailing rack,** thin, broken clouds, sailing or floating through the air. **35–38. As . . . wings.** Show the points of likeness in this comparison. **41. crimson pall.** Describe the picture.

45–58. **53. whirl and flee.** What gives the stars this appearance? **55. wind-built.** Explain the adjective. **56–58. Till . . . these.** Describe how the waters become like strips of the sky.

59–72. **59–60. I bind . . . pearl.** Explain 'burning zone' and 'girdle of pearl.' **61–62. The . . . unfurl.** Discuss these lines. **66. be,** here an indicative. **69. powers . . . chair.** Meaning? **71. The . . . wove.** Comment upon the process.

73–84. Discuss the figures. **73; 74. daughter; nursling.** How so? **81. cenotaph.** Look up meaning and apply it to this picture. **82. caverns of rain.** What is meant?

TO NIGHT

This lyric was written in 1821. Shelley here gives extraordinary evidence of his wizardry in the technique of verse. The metrical effects, the combinations of vowel sounds, the swing of the verse, and its peculiar cadences — all contribute to make the stanzas well-nigh perfect.

1–7. Swiftly . . . flight. What is the metrical and stanzaic system of the poem? **1. western wave.** In what direction is Night represented as moving, and why? **13. opiate wand,** thus producing sleep. **20. unloved guest.** Why? unloved by whom? **22. brother Death.** In what sense is Death the brother of Night? **24. filmy-eyed.** Consider the epithet. Discuss the use of personification in the poem.

STANZAS FROM ADONAIS

Adonais, an Elegy on the Death of John Keats, was printed at Pisa, Italy, in 1821. Keats died at Rome, February 23 of that year; the elegy was written between the end of May and June 16. Mrs. Shelley pointed out, after the author's own death, that the poem "seems now more applicable to Shelley himself than to the young and gifted poet whom he mourned." Though it was not received with any immediate enthusiasm, the world now knows that it is one of the seven or eight greatest elegies ever written. Shelley believed it to be the least imperfect of his compositions. Our selection — from the second half of the poem, beginning with the thirty-ninth stanza — affirms that high comfort which at last comes to the bereaved heart as, brooding upon the mystery of life and death, it divines the sustaining reality, the eternal Purpose in which the soul of man is an essential and abiding participant. Here, again, it should be noted, the Spenserian stanza

is a lyre of subtle power and varied capacity. Spenser, Byron, Shelley, and Keats, — what manifold and enchanting strains they have drawn from this instrument ! — Of the finest elegies in the English language four are printed in full in this volume : Milton's *Lycidas*, Gray's *Elegy*, Arnold's *Rugby Chapel*, and Watson's *Wordsworth's Grave*, and in addition to the present selection from *Adonais* there is included the introduction to Tennyson's *In Memoriam*. In the comparison of these elegies the reflective student will find much food for thought.

Adonais. This name for Keats was doubtless suggested by the Adonis of Bion's dirge, — a Greek (Alexandrian) elegy to which Shelley was indebted in part for the general mechanism of the first half of his poem. The word, 'Adonais,' may mean a poem about Adonis ; more probably, however — since it is used as the name of a person — it means "one *like* Adonis, as dear to Urania, the goddess of heavenly love and muse of high poetry, as Adonis was to Aphrodite," or one who like the mythical Adonis (Adon) rose again from the dead. On Adonis, Bion, etc., see *Cl. M.*, pp. 126–128.

1–18. In previous lines of the poem Shelley, copying the same classical device that Milton used in *Lycidas*, has pictured the muse and various personifications of poetic power and of nature as lamenting the death of Adonais. Now he turns to a grander theme, the belief that the dead do not perish, but, free of the impediments of the flesh, enter the glorious life of the spirit. Milton makes a similar transition at line 165 of *Lycidas*. Such a theme is, of course, characteristic of Christian elegy. **1–9.** In this and the following stanzas Shelley boldly declares "that the state we call death is to be preferred to that which we call life. Keats is neither dead nor sleeping. He used to be asleep, perturbed and tantalized by the dream which is termed life. Having at last awakened from the dream, he is no longer asleep : and, if life is no more than a dream, neither does the cessation of life deserve to be named death. . . . We, the so-called living, are in fact merely beset by a series of stormy visions which constitute life ; all our efforts are expended upon mere phantoms, and are therefore profitless ; our mental conflict is an act of trance, exercised upon mere nothings" (W. M. Rossetti). In the light of this paraphrase interpret the impressive figures of ll. 5–9 : what is the spirit's knife ? Why '*invulnerable* nothings' ? Why are our hopes termed *cold*, and why are they compared to the gruesome coffin worm ? **10–18.** An extension of the previous idea. **14. contagion of the world's slow stain.** The meaning of this most expressive figure is made clear by the examples of the 'slow stain' in l. 16. **18. urn**, funeral urn.

19–54. Nature, previously represented as mourning for Adonais, shall instead be joyous (19–27), for he is now made one with all nature and is a portion of its loveliness which once, in his poetry, he made still more lovely (28–38). His spirit is united with the great Power behind all life (34–36), which manifests itself plastically, in the forms of the sense-world, though the coarseness of the matter in which it is manifested obscures its full glory (39–45). This spiritual splendor of all life of all time may not be eclipsed

by death (46–50), and the spiritual glory of the so-called dead is rediscovered whenever youth, struggling to rise from the life ('lair') of sloth and selfishness, becomes aware of the solemn mystery of existence, for then youth sees beneath the veil of matter and form, recognizes and *loves* the beauty of the spirit, and communicates with the undying souls of human forms long dead — their spirits being tangibly preserved to him in their great works and present influence (50–54). — The somewhat pantheistic nature of these conceptions reminds one of Wordsworth's Spirit of Nature.

55–72. The thought of ll. 19–54 is restated — the one Spirit being called Light, Beauty, Benediction, Love, Breath — and, with a sort of prophecy of his own death, or at least with a momentary intuition or actual experience of the spiritual reality of which he has been writing, is brought into personal relation with the poet. Indeed, this sublime hymn of the spirit seems to come from the very gate of Heaven itself, "consuming the last clouds of cold mortality." — The force of the word 'Beacons' (the light that lights the homeward way) in the last line is beautifully appropriate. Why? — The student whose heart is lifted up by these great lines may enjoy Dante's sublime expression of the same ideas. In particular, compare ll. 39–45, 55, 58–62 with the first three lines of the *Paradiso;* ll. 64–69 with the first fifteen lines of the second canto of the *Paradiso;* and the whole conception of the creative and moulding (plastic) Power with Dante's description of his vision of God (*Paradiso*, Canto XXXIII, ll. 82–93).

To the successful handling of this great theme Shelley's marvellous control of verbal music contributes mightily. The prosody — the perfect adaptation of sound to sense, the metrical substitutions and variation in the position of the cæsura, by which the cadence is vitalized and enriched, the splendor of the Alexandrine conclusions to each stanza — the student may easily learn to appreciate if he will repeatedly read the lines aloud, or silently to the inner ear. When he has done this, he will find further pleasure in reading aloud, for comparison, some of the stanzas of the *Faerie Queene*, *Childe Harold*, and *Eve of St. Agnes* that are given in this book. For suggestions see INTRODUCTION on the rhythm of verse, melody, harmony, and on the elegy, §§ **20**, 1, 2; **21**; **22**; **24**, 5; **30**, 5.

THE SPIRIT OF POETRY: THE GLORY OF PROMETHEUS

These selections are from Shelley's greatest poem, *Prometheus Unbound* (published 1820). The first, in which is described the poet's power of divining or creating ideal reality, is from Act I; the second, a noble expression of what constitutes true greatness, spiritual beauty, and freedom, closes the poem. Nowhere, perhaps, is there a better statement of equal brevity, of the essence of the poetic faculty than is contained in the former, and it would be hard to find a definition of right thought and right action more sublime and adequate than that of the latter. The 'Titan,' of course, is Prometheus, who represents in the poem "the type of the highest per-

fection of moral and intellectual nature impelled by the purest and the truest motives to the best and noblest ends." See *Cl. M.*, pp. 8, 10–15.

OZYMANDIAS

This is not only Shelley's greatest sonnet, but one of the finest of all sonnets. It is a striking expression of two ideas that continually occur in Shelley's writings, — the vainglory of kings and the mutability of life. The simple but masterful reflection of human passions, the sense of remote antiquity, the enveloping loneliness and infinity of the desert ; the staccato beat of the octave, resolved in the sonorous rhythm of the inscription and succeeded by the lingering cadences of the last three lines with their quiet close (*cf.* ll. 186–193 of *Lycidas*, and note) : these are some of the impressive features of the poem. The unusual interweaving of the rhymes in octave and sestet is noteworthy. The sonnet was first published in 1818.

Ozymandias. A corruption of one of the names of Rameses II (c. 1292–1225 B.C.), the most famous ruler of ancient Egypt and its greatest builder of temples and palaces. Perhaps he was the Pharaoh of the oppression. In many places in Egypt are colossal statues of him, but the poem probably refers to one of the three in the temple known as the Ramesseum, — near Thebes. Diodorus, the Augustan historian, reports that on one statue was this inscription : " I am Ozymandyas, King of Kings ; if any would know how great I am, and where I lie, let him excel me in any of my works." 7–8. **survive . . . hand**, etc. ' Survive ' is transitive ; its objects are ' hand ' and ' heart.' The passions stamped on this lifeless stone survive the sculptor's hand that imitated (' mocked ') them and the ruler's vainglorious heart that ' fed ' them.

KEATS

THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

St. Agnes was a Roman maiden who suffered martyrdom under the Emperor Diocletian about 300 A.D. The tradition runs that not long after her death she appeared to her parents in a vision in the midst of angels and accompanied by a white lamb. The lamb was henceforward considered sacred to her, and the custom accordingly arose that on St. Agnes's Day (January 21) the nuns of the church should bring two white lambs as an offering to her altar. Various superstitions became connected with her name, among others the belief that maidens who carefully observed certain ceremonies might, on St. Agnes's eve (January 20), obtain a sight of their future husbands. On this tradition Keats's poem is founded. As a narrative it is not without defects, but as a poem of sensuous impressions it has few equals. Sight, hearing, taste, smell, feeling, are laid under tribute and made to respond to the keen yet delicate sensibilities of the poet. Few poets have succeeded in creating an atmosphere so dreamy, so enchanted,

so full of beauty, so removed from the common world of our everyday experiences. In many respects *The Eve of St. Agnes* takes us back to the fairyland of Spenser. On the metrical structure of its stanzas, see INTRODUCTION, § 24, 5. The poem was first printed in the volume of 1820, though it had been written the early part of the preceding year.

I–III. Rehearse the various ways by which the cold is suggested in these lines. **2. for**, in spite of. **5. Beadsman**, a retainer of the house whose business it was to utter prayers for his benefactors. The original but now obsolete meaning of bead was a prayer. **told** : see note to *L'Alleg.* (67). **6–9. while . . . picture.** In what particulars is this simile thoroughly "in keeping"? **14–15. dead . . . rails.** The images of the dead ancestors of the household are carved in an attitude of prayer. Their oratories, or prayer rooms, are the little railed-off spaces on each side of the chapel aisle. Their enforced imprisonment, under conditions so unpleasant, suggests 'purgatorial.' **21. Flattered.** Leigh Hunt, in his *Imagination and Fancy*, devotes a page and a half to rather over-enthusiastic praise of the aptness of this verb. What are some of its points of excellence? **22. But no.** To what thought in the beadsman's mind is this an answer?

IV–VIII. What means are used by the poet to give the effect of space and magnificence in Stanzas IV and V? Enumerate the details by which emphasis is given to the introduction of the principal character, Madeline. **31. snarling.** Aptness of word? **34–36. The carved . . . breasts.** Describe the picture, especially noting 'eager-eyed.' **37. argent**, bright or shining, as silver. Why this color rather than golden? **39–41. Numerous . . . romance.** Show aptness in the comparison. **56. The music . . . pain** : What characteristic of the music is suggested by the words 'yearning,' 'God in pain'? **58. train**, of the ladies' skirts. **60. tiptoe**, an adjective meaning eager yet mincing. **62. she saw not.** How is the preoccupation of Madeline evidenced in Stanzas VII and VIII? **70. Hoodwinked.** Meaning and syntax? **all amort**, the Anglicized form of the French *à la mort*, as if dead. **71. lambs unshorn.** The lambs offered at the altar of St. Agnes. They were then shorn and the wool spun by the nuns. See introduction to notes.

IX–XII. **74. across the moors.** In what country and at what time may we imagine these events to have occurred? **76. portal** (Lat. *porta*), a gate. **78. All saints.** What is gained artistically by placing these scenes in a Catholic environment? Give illustrations. **84. Love's fev'rous citadel.** Discuss the metaphor. **86. Hyena.** Show force of this word here. **90. beldame**, an old woman. Look up derivation and history of word. **100 ; 103. dwarfish Hildebrand ; old Lord Maurice.** Observe the vividness with which the poet "hits off" these characters. **105. Gossip.** Note the history of this word : (1) a sponsor in baptism (A.-S. *god* + *sib*, a God alliance), hence a godmother ; (2) a familiar or customary acquaintance ; (3) an idle tattler ; (4) the tattle of a gossip. In what sense is the word used here?

XIII–XIX. **111. well-a-day**, a corruption of the interjection wel-a-way (A.-S. *wa-la-wa*), alas. **112. a little moonlight room.** "The poet does not make his 'little moonlight room' comfortable, observe. All is still wintry. There is to be no comfort in the poem but what is given by love. All else may be left to the cold walls" (Leigh Hunt). **115. by the holy loom** : see note on l. 71. **127. Feebly she laugheth.** Why does she laugh? Describe the picture in detail. Discuss the figure which follows. **129. urchin.** Look up derivation and trace history of word. **133. brook.** This word is used inaccurately here. What does the poet evidently intend to say? **156. passing-bell**, a tolling of a bell to signify that a soul has passed or is passing from the body (formerly to invoke prayers for the dying). **171. Since . . . debt.** Forman, the editor of Keats, explains this line by interpreting Merlin's monstrous debt as "his monstrous existence, which he owed to a demon," and repaid when he died or disappeared through means of a charm which he had revealed to Vivien, and which she used on him. These are legendary characters of the time of King Arthur. The night on which the magician was thus spellbound by his wily sweetheart was attended by a fearful storm. Does 'such a night,' etc. (170), refer to this storm or to the spirit of enchantment in the air?

XX–XXVI. What are the characteristic qualities of the descriptions in Stanzas XXIV and XXV? Note what senses are appealed to. **173. cates**, luxurious foods or delicacies. Look up derivation, and *cf.* cater and caterer; also 'catering' (177). **174. tambour frame.** What is this? **175. lute.** Why introduced? See ll. 289–293. **193. missioned**, in its radical sense of sent (Lat. *missum*). **unaware**, unexpectedly. **198. frayed**, terrified. The situation in this stanza is interesting; the trembling Angela startled by the trembling Madeline, etc. In this way fill out the picture. **200. Its . . . died.** What kind of figure? "The smoke of the wax taper seems almost as ethereal and fair as the moonlight, and both suit each other and the heroine" (Leigh Hunt). **203. No uttered syllable.** Why? **207. heart-stifled.** How does this apply to Madeline? **208–216. A casement . . . kings.** Leigh Hunt speaks of this stanza as "a burst of richness, noiseless, colored, suddenly enriching the moonlight, as if a door of heaven were opened." Note here as in Stanzas IV and XXV–XXXI the vividness of the derived or memory images and see INTRODUCTION, § 7. Try to gain a definite picture of this 'triple-arched' window. Where was the carving? Of what size and shape were the panes? What were the 'emblazonings' and the 'twilight saints'? Where was the 'shielded scutcheon,' and in what sense did it 'blush with blood of queens and kings'? **218. gules**, used poetically for a red color. **218–222. gules, Rose-bloom, soft amethyst; glory.** On this passage Sidney Colvin remarks: "Observation, I believe, shows that moonlight has not the power to transmit the hues of painted glass, as Keats in this celebrated passage represents it. Let us be grateful for the error, if error it is, which has led him to heighten by these saintly splendors of color the sentiment of a scene wherein a volup-

tuous glow is so exquisitely attempered with chivalrous chastity and awe." **221. amethyst.** Look up the derivation of the word, and the meaning as applied to heraldry. **228. warmed jewels.** Here we have a good instance of the poet's perfection of taste. Madeline is to be the central figure. Accordingly, Keats resists the temptation to enlarge upon the brilliancy of the gems, but contents himself with an epithet " breathing the very life of the wearer." **234. dares not look behind** : see l. 53.

XXVII–XXXIII. **237. poppied warmth.** Explain the epithet and figure. **241. Clasped . . . pray.** A ' missal ' is a mass-book or prayer-book. **swart Paynims** are dark or swarthy pagans. Is the missal ' clasped ' because it is never used in pagan lands, or to shield its contents ? **242. Blinded.** What does this figure mean ? **244. so.** Force of this adverb ? **250. Noiseless . . . wilderness.** Discuss the aptness of the comparison. **251. hushed carpet.** What kind of figure ? This is certainly an anachronism. Floors in medieval times were strewn with rushes. *Cf. Sir Launfal* (103). For ' carpet ' used in its older and proper sense, see l. 285. **253. faded moon.** Discuss the epithet. Enumerate the elements of color and of sound in this stanza. **257. Morphean amulet,** charm to insure sleep, lest the music awaken Madeline. **260. Affray,** same as *fray* (198). **262. azure-lidded sleep.** Discuss the epithet. **264–275. While . . . light.** These lines were evidently introduced because Keats could not resist this chance of appeal to the sense of taste, thus adding to the richness and Oriental coloring of his picture. For the apt sequence of consonants, see INTRODUCTION, § 21, 1, 3. Does this Feast of St. Agnes add to the poem ? **266. soother,** more sweet or delightful. **267. tinct.** (*Cf.* tint.) These syrups were evidently given a richer appearance by being stained with cinnamon. **268. argosy.** Derivation ? *Cf. Merchant of Venice,* I, 1, 9. **269. Fez,** a province in northwestern Africa. **270. silken Samarcand.** A city in Russian Turkestan, Central Asia. Why ' silken ' ? **cedared Lebanon.** A province of Turkey in Syria, southwestern Asia. Why ' cedared ' ? **271. delicates.** Same as ' cates ' (173). **277. eremite,** an older and more correct form of the word hermit. **279. soul doth ache** : *cf.* ' half-anguished,' l. 255. **285. carpet,** table-cover — the original meaning of carpet. As here used the word is not an anachronism. **288. woofed,** woven. **289. hollow,** resounding. **291. ancient ditty** : see note on *La Belle Dame,* etc. This French poem was written early in the fifteenth century, by Alain Chartier. **292. Provence,** an old province in southeastern France. **296. affrayed** : see l. 260, and *cf.* the modern form, afraid.

XXXIV–XXXIX. Observe in this passage how cleverly the poet manages the difficult situation of the awakening of Madeline. **317. voluptuous,** in its radical sense of causing delight, caressingly pleasing to the ear. **322–324. meantime . . . window-panes.** Why does the poet make the weather change from chill moonlight to gusty storm ? **325. flaw,** a sudden burst or gust of wind of short duration. Purpose of the descriptive lines 325 and 327 ? **336. Thy . . . dyed.** What does this line mean ? Is it

hopelessly extravagant, as some editors hold, or can you justify it? **344. haggard**, wild or untamed. **boon.** Why? **349. Rhenish**, Rhine wine. *Cf. Merchant of Venice*, I, 2. **mead**, a fermented drink made of water and honey with malt, yeast, etc.

XL–XLII. **353. sleeping dragons.** What is meant? **360. carpets**: see note on l. 251. **361. They glide.** Would it have been better to represent further perils in leaving the house? Discuss. **365. wakeful bloodhound.** Why introduced? **370. ay, ages long ago.** Observe the art by which the poet throws a veil of mystery about his poem by assigning it to the remote past, and by removing the only other characters that have entered into the story, — " the figures of the beadsman and the nurse, who live just long enough to share in the wonders of the night and to die quietly of old age when their parts are over " ; as, indeed, was foretold in ll. 22–23 and 155–156. The castle is left to the drunken baron and his warrior-guests, while the lovers are ' fled away into the storm.'

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

The note of sadness, distinct in this poem, is partly explained when we consider the date of its production, and the events preceding it. Consumption was hereditary in the family of Keats, and during the latter months of 1818 the poet had been witness to the struggles of his brother against that disease. The brother died in December, and doubtless about this time Keats began to foresee the same fate for himself, although the malady did not define itself until a year later. This ode, written in the early part of 1819, when the writer's sorrow was at its height, furnishes an interesting companion picture to Shelley's *Skylark*. For another contrast between lark and nightingale, see *L'Alleg.* (41–44) and *Il Pens.* (56–58).

I. The stanzas of the poem are uniform. What is their metre and rhyme system? **4. Lethe.** For this river of forgetfulness, see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 51. **6. too happy.** The poet's heartache comes from the sensitive and exquisite sympathy he feels with the bird ; his sympathetic and sensuous pleasure has in its intensity become pain. **7–10. That . . . ease.** Meaning of ' that ' and syntax of the clause? The correct answer will make clear the meaning. **7. Dryad.** Why does he call the bird a Dryad? See *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 45.

II–IV, l. 34. **13. Flora**, the goddess of flowers. See *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 39, 61. **14. Provençal**, a district in southern France noted for its wines and for the merry out-of-door life of its people, its open-air or ' sunburnt ' mirth. See *Eve of St. Agnes* (292). **16. Hippocrene**, a fountain of the Muses on Mt. Helicon. See *Cl. M.*, p. 518. Explain the metonymy. **23–24. The weariness . . . groan.** This view of the world is one often expressed by poets. *Cf.* Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey* (52–53): —

" the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world."

26. youth, evidently thinking of his brother. **31–34. Away . . . retards.** Here he determines to forget the world, and to find the fairyland of the nightingale through the power of 'Poesy' rather than of wine. **32. Bacchus**: see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 44. **pards.** Look up and *cf.* leopard (from Lat. *leo*, lion + pard). These animals were sacred to Bacchus.

IV, l. 35–V. A description of the land of Poesy, home of the nightingale. **35. Already with thee.** He suddenly imagines himself in that land. **39–40. Save . . . ways**, as the swaying branches of the trees admit the fitful light. **43. embalmed darkness**, darkness permeated by the balmy odor of the season's fragrance. What kind of figure? Throughout these lines note the appeal to the sense of smell. **50. The . . . eves.** Observe the onomatopœia.

VI–VIII. **51. Darkling**, in the dark. **I listen**, coördinate with 'it seems rich.' **for**, inasmuch as (a subordinate conjunction). Its clause modifies 'seems rich.' **62. No . . . down.** A fine example of a line inevitable in thought and grace. It recalls somewhat the idea of ll. 23–24. The stanza is beyond praise — replete with poetic touchstones. **65. found a path.** Explain this beautiful metaphor. **67. alien corn**, the wheat and barley which Ruth gleaned in the land of Boaz. See the book of *Ruth* ii. 3, 23. **70. faery lands forlorn**: fairy lands *forsaken* by those who live in the light of common day. The chance word 'forlorn' awakens him into the real world. The last lines are unsurpassable in suggestion and charm. **75–80. Adieu . . . sleep.** In some respects these lines may be compared with the last stanza of *The Lady of the Lake*. **75. fades.** Justify the figure. Observe the quiet close, and see note on *Lyc.* (186–193).

ODE ON A GREȻIAN URN

The Grecian Urn and *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* have been called "the twin peaks" of Keats's verse. The subject of the ode was especially attractive to Keats, for no one had a deeper sympathy with the artistic spirit of Hellas than he. "I have loved," he says, "the principle of beauty in all things"; and he recognized in the Greeks the most perfect portrayers of the beautiful. He was a devoted student of their plastic art through the specimens preserved in the British Museum. And from a comparison of these sculptures with engravings of others, he doubtless derived the conception of his *Grecian Urn;* for it has not been discovered that any single work of art stood as model. This, like most of Keats's other odes, was written in 1819. The metrical structure of its stanzas may profitably be compared with that of the *Ode to a Nightingale.*

1–10. 1–3. bride of quietness, foster-child of silence and slow time, Sylvan historian. Comment upon the figures and show how each applies to the *Grecian Urn*. **5–10. What . . . ecstasy.** Note the subtle indirectness of the description. **5. leaf-fringed legend haunts.** Notice the imagery of these words. **7. Tempe**, a vale in Thessaly.

11 30. These lines furnish an admirable contrast between the shortness

and decay of life and the abiding beauty of art. The creator of the urn has arrested his characters at a single significant moment of their lives. They accordingly live for us in permanent beauty and imaginative appeal. **11–12. those unheard Are sweeter.** Explain. See INTRODUCTION, § 21, 1, 3, on tone-color and melody in verse, and illustrate from this stanza. **13. sensual**, here means physical or bodily. **18. winning near**, approaching. **25. More happy love**, happier even than the boughs or the melodist. Its anticipation is far more to be desired than the cloying realities of actual life (29–30). **28. passion.** Object of 'above.'

31–40. **31. sacrifice.** The central figures of the urn appear to be engaged in sacrificial procession. **38. little town**, whose inhabitants have been caught by the hand of the artist and placed upon this urn.

41–50. **41. brede**, braid, fillet. **44–45. tease . . . eternity.** The urn like eternity exhausts our powers of thought. **46–50. When . . . know.** Again the permanence of art is emphasized — art that shall teach to future generations what was to Keats a cardinal doctrine, that Beauty is only another name for Truth, and that of all things she alone is imperishable. What lines of this ode are worthy to be accepted as poetic touchstones, and why? (See INTRODUCTION, § 34.)

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

La Belle Dame Sans Merci was written probably during the early part of 1819. The title, which is taken from an old French poem, seems early to have caught Keats's fancy, as is indicated by the use made of it in the *Eve of St. Agnes*, l. 292. Keats's mystical ballad, however, is entirely his own invention, and is justly considered to be one of our best poetic revivals of medieval romanticism. Sidney Colvin, in his *Life of Keats*, says, "The union of infinite tenderness with a weird intensity, the conciseness and purity of the poetic form, the wild yet simple magic of the cadences, the perfect, inevitable union of sound and sense, make of *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* the masterpiece not only among the shorter poems of Keats, but even (if any single masterpiece must be chosen) among them all." As regards the poetic symbolism of the verses, Colvin continues: "Keats's ballad can hardly be said to tell a story; but rather sets before us, with imagery drawn from the medieval world of enchantment and knight-errantry, a type of the wasting power of love, when either adverse fate or deluded choice makes of love not a blessing but a bane. Every reader must feel how truly the imagery expresses the passion: how powerfully, through these fascinating old-world symbols, the universal heart of man is made to speak."

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER

Though as a writer of sonnets Keats cannot compare with Milton in quality, or with Wordsworth in either quantity or quality, he probably ought to be ranked above most other writers of this form of verse. His sonnets

are mostly of the strict Italian type, described in the INTRODUCTION, §§ 26; 30, 6. Examine the sonnets of this book, comparing the skill by which this form of verse has been written by various poets. See pp. 46, 50–51, 93–94, 174–175, 239, 261, 461, 471, 571, 573–574.

As we have noted, Keats, though handicapped by lack of knowledge of the Greek language, had an intellectual and emotional sympathy with the spirit of Greek art and literature. On coming to London the young poet was accustomed to spend his evenings reading with his friend Cowden Clarke. One of the books they thus attacked was a borrowed copy of Chapman's Homer, which they read far into the night. On coming down to breakfast next morning, Clarke found awaiting him this sonnet, which Keats had written since leaving him a few hours before. This was sometime during the summer of 1815, when Keats was only twenty years of age, and had as yet done nothing to show his power as a poet. Yet the sonnet is not only his best, but is one of the best of all English sonnets.

What are the 'realms of gold,' the 'states,' 'kingdoms,' and 'western islands' of ll. 1–4? Why 'fealty to Apollo'? Why 'deep-browed' (6)? 'Chapman' (8), poet and dramatist, was a contemporary of Shakespeare. The tribute which Keats pays him in this sonnet is well deserved, for his translations rank among the best in the English language. 'Cortez' (11): It was Balboa and not Cortez who discovered the Pacific; but as Mr. Colvin says, "What does it matter?" 'Darien' (14) refers to the Isthmus of Panama.

MACAULAY

HORATIUS

Horatius is the first of Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*, a collection of four stirring ballads, published in 1842. In a preface to the *Lays* the poet states his grounds for believing that the early Romans once possessed a considerable volume of ballad-poetry, which, after being transformed into history, had been allowed to perish. As to *Horatius*, he says: "There can be little doubt that among those parts of early Roman history which had a poetic origin was the legend of Horatius Cocles. . . . The following ballad is supposed to have been made about a hundred and twenty years after the war which it celebrates, and just before the taking of Rome by the Gauls. The imaginary Roman author seems to have been an honest citizen, proud of the military glory of his country, sick of the disputes of factions, and much given to pining after good old times which had really never existed."

As is shown by the heading of the poem, Macaulay supposes his "honest citizen" to have made this ballad about three hundred and sixty years after the founding of Rome, or 393 B.C. It need not detract from our enjoyment of the story to learn that there is little or no historic foundation for the legend of Horatius. As a matter of fact, according to the Roman historian, Tacitus, Porsena's expedition was entirely successful, and Rome passed for a time

under the Etruscan yoke. The tale of Horatius and his two companions was no doubt fabricated to increase the patriotic ardor of the Romans, and to help them forget the chagrin of defeat. But the historical accuracy of the story is a matter of only secondary importance. As Professor Morley says in his introduction to the *Lays*, "The songs of the people were free to suppress a great defeat and put in its place a myth of a heroic deed : some small fact serving as seed that shall grow and blossom out into a noble tale."

I–II. Indicate the topic which these stanzas develop. 1. **Lars**, a title of honor given by Romans to the Etruscan kings. **Porsena**, king of Clusium, who, when summoned to the aid of Tarquinius Superbus, completely conquered Rome. See introduction to these notes. **Clusium**, the most important of the twelve cities of the Etruscan confederation, situated in the fertile valley of the river Clanis, a tributary of the Tiber. 2. **Nine Gods**, the nine great Etruscan gods, hurlers of the thunderbolt. 3. **house of Tarquin**. The family of Tarquinius Superbus, the seventh and last of the legendary kings of Rome, had been expelled from the city, in consequence of a brutal assault made upon Lucretia, a Roman matron, by Sextus, the second son of Tarquin. Porsena evidently considered this expulsion of the Tarquins a 'wrong' (l. 4), and led in this, the third attempt to restore them to power. 10. **East . . . north** : see note on l. 23 below. 11. **ride**. Explain change of tense. What is the verse-form of this poem ? How does it differ from that of *The Ancient Mariner?* (See notes on *The Ancient Mariner* and INTRODUCTION, § 24, 3, 5; on the Ballad see § 31, 3.)

III–V. Give topics as before. 23. **beech and pine** : *cf.* among many other instances ll. 8, 12, and 20–22. This is one of the most marked characteristics of Macaulay's style, *i.e.* the preference for the *definite* and *concrete* instead of the *general* and *abstract*. 25. **purple Apennine**. Why 'purple' ? 26. **Volaterræ**, one of the twelve cities of the Etruscan league, 'lordly' because on the summit of a high and precipitous hill. 30. **Populonia**, the chief seacoast town of Etruria, situated on a high peninsula, near the island of 'Ilva' (Elba), and within sight of the large island of Sardinia. 34. **Pisæ**, one of the twelve Etruscan cities, situated on the bank of the river Arnus (Arno) a few miles from its mouth, and on a good harbor, hence ll. 34–37. 36. **Massilia**. Marseilles, in France. **triremes**. Meaning and derivation ? 37. **fair-haired slaves**, evidently on their way from northern Gaul to the slave marts of Italy. 38. **Clanis** : see note on l. 1. 40. **Cortona**. Still another of the twelve cities of the league, on a lofty hill about nine miles north of Lake Trasimene.

VI–VIII. Give topics. 42–49. **Tall . . . mere**. Why this detail regarding the height of the oaks, the fatness of the stags, etc.? Show relation of this stanza to the next. 43. **Auser**. A small river formerly tributary of the Arno. See note l. 34. Its channel has become diverted. The present name of the river is the Serchio. Why 'dark' ? 45. **Ciminian**, a wooded mountain range extending from the Tiber southwest to the sea. 46. **Clitumnus**, a small tributary of the Tiber draining a valley of rich pasture lands.

49. Volsinian mere. The modern Lago di Bolsena, a lake of southern Etruria. 'Mere' (lake) and marsh (swampy land such as frequently borders lakes) are derived from Lat. *mare* (sea). **52. green path.** Why 'green'? **58. Arretium**, the modern Arezzo, birthplace of Petrarch. Arretium, one of the most powerful of the twelve cities of the league, was situated in the upper valley of the Arno, at the foot of the Apennines. **60. Umbro**, modern Ombrone, a large river of Etruria between the Arno and the Tiber. **62. Luna**, the most northerly town of Etruria, famous for its wines. **59–64. old men, young boys, girls.** Explain why. Note here and elsewhere the preponderance of derived, or remembered, images, and see INTRODUCTION, §§ 6; 7.

IX–X. Give topic. **66. prophets.** Etruscan augurs whose duty it was to interpret the will of the gods. **71. turned the verses o'er**, *i.e.* pondered over their ancient sacred books of prophecy. **72. Traced . . . right.** The Etruscans, like some of the peoples of western Asia, wrote from the right to the left. **linen**, on which early books were sometimes written. **79. dome**, palace (from Lat. *domus*, house). **80. Nurscia**, an Etruscan goddess of Fortune. **81. golden shields**, the twelve sacred shields of Rome, dating from the time of Numa, the second legendary king.

XI–XII. Give topic. **83. tale**, number. See note on *L'Alleg.* (67). **86. Sutrium**, a small town in southern Etruria, and about thirty miles north of Rome. **96. Tusculan Mamilius**, Octavius Mamilius (son-in-law of Tarquinius), a leader of Tusculum, a city fifteen miles southeast of Rome. Owing to his power and to his connection with the Tarquins, he was made leader of the Latin allies of Porsena.

XIII–XV. Give topic. **98. yellow**, an adjective commonly used in describing the Tiber. This color is probably due to the red volcanic earth which forms the river bed. **100. champaign.** Look up meaning and derivation, comparing with camp, campus, campaign, and champagne. **115. skins of wine**, bags of goatskin in which wine was carried. **116. endless.** Describe scene. **117. kine**, an old plural of cow. **121. roaring gate.** Why 'roaring'? Name all the subjects of 'choked.'

XVI–XIX. Give topics. **122. rock Tarpeian**, a steep rock, eighty feet high, overlooking the Roman Forum. See Tarpeia in *Cl. D.*, or among Names of Fiction in *Dict.* **124. blazing villages.** Explain. **126. Fathers**, the Senators, who were generally old men. See derivation of Senate. **129. tidings**: see next stanza. **133. Crustumerium**, an ancient town of Latium. **134. Ostia.** The seaport of Rome, fifteen miles distant at the mouth of the Tiber. **134; 136. Verbenna; Astur.** Names of Etruscan chiefs, invented by Macaulay. **136. Janiculum**, a hill across the Tiber, just outside Rome. **138. I wis**, surely. An adverb sometimes written *ywis*. *Cf.* the German word *gewiss*. **140. But**, but that; that did not. **142. Consul**, one of the two chief magistrates who ruled Rome after the expulsion of the kings. **144. gowns**, togas, which would hinder rapid walking. **145. them.** In form a personal pronoun, here used as a reflexive. **150. roundly,**

plainly and to the point. **151. bridge,** a very old wooden bridge across the Tiber from Rome to Janiculum.

XX–XXV. Give topic. **163. red whirlwind.** Note that the forces are coming so near that the color of the dust can be seen, and coming so fast that the 'storm' is now a 'whirlwind.' **165. rolling cloud.** Explain. **162–173. And . . . spears.** Show how rhyme and metre of this long stanza help to picture a hurried approach. **177. twelve fair cities,** of the Etruscan confederation. **178. Clusium** : see note on l. 1. **180–181. Umbrian, Gaul,** both often invaded by the Etruscans. **184. port and vest,** demeanor and dress. **crest,** the plumes on his helmet. **185. Lucumo,** a name given to an Etruscan noble. **186. Cilnius of Arretium,** the head of a noble Etruscan family. **187. Astur,** from Luna. See note on l. 136. **fourfold shield,** a shield consisting of four layers of hide. **188. brand,** a sword, so called from its flashing brightness. **may wield** : see l. 355. **189. Tolumnius,** another Etruscan chief. **191. Verbenna** : see note on l. 134. **197. Mamilius** : see l. 96 and note. **199–200. Sextus . . . shame** : see note on l. 3.

XXVI–XXX. Give topic. **217. Horatius,** a member of the Lucretian tribe of the patricians. The other patrician tribes were the Ramnian and the Titian. **220. soon or late.** How do we ordinarily express this? **229–230. holy maidens . . . flame.** The Vestal virgins, six in number, chosen from the three patrician families. It was their duty to keep burning the 'eternal flame' on Vesta's altar. See *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 35. **237. strait.** Do not confuse with *straight*. Look up in *Dict.*

XXXI–XXXIV. Give topic. **253. Rome's quarrel,** foreign war waged by Rome. **261. lands . . . portioned,** public lands acquired by conquest, and rented out by the state to private persons. Owing to their political influence, the patricians, in early times, usually secured the larger share of the land, thus causing perpetual grievance to the plebeians. See introduction to these notes. **262. spoils . . . sold.** This fixes the supposed time of the ballad, since, in 391 B.C., Camillus, a Roman commander at Veii, was thus accused of unfair distribution of spoils of battle. **267. Tribunes,** first appointed in 494 B.C., to protect the interests of the plebeians against patrician oppression. Their numbers were successively two, five, and ten. **beard,** to oppose defiantly; originally to grasp a man by the beard. **268. Fathers** : see note on l. 126. **269–270. As . . . cold.** Show how internal dissension thus decreases national spirit. **274. harness,** armor. **278. crow,** crowbar. Why so called?

XXXV–XXXVI. Give topic. Stanzas XXXV and XXI have been called the finest of the poem. In what respects may this opinion be maintained? Are these stanzas as poetical as V–VIII, LXVIII–LXX? **288. measured tread.** How does this suggest the vastness of the army?

XXXVII–XL. Give topic. **301. Tifernum,** a town in Umbria on the Tiber. **304. Ilva's mines.** The iron mines of 'Ilva' (Elba) have always been celebrated. See note on l. 30. **306. Vassal.** Picus, the Umbrian,

evidently held his land as tributary to Clusium. **309. Nequinum**, an Umbrian town on the river Nar, several miles above its junction with the Tiber. It is situated on a high, steep hill. **319. Falerii**, an important city of southern Etruria. **321. Urgo**, a small island between Etruria and Corsica. **322. rover**, pirate. **323. Volsinium**, Volsinii, a city of Etruria, just north of the lake of the same name. See l. 49 and note. **326. Cosa**, a town in Etruria on the coast. **328. Albinia**, a river of Etruria, emptying into the sea near Cosa. **335. Ostia** : see note on l. 134. **337. Campania**, a level province of central Italy, south of Latium. **hinds**, peasants.

XLI–XLVII. Give topic. **340–343. But now . . . rose.** Why ? **344. Six spears' lengths.** About what distance ? **355. which . . . wield.** The use of ' he ' instead of him after ' but ' is not to be censured as a solecism here. ' But ' in this construction should be considered as a conjunction used adverbially in the sense of only, and not a preposition, — though some authorities regard it as such. See *Century Dict.* **360. she-wolf's litter.** The Romans are called the brood of the wolf, in reference to the fable of the suckling of Romulus and Remus by the she-wolf. See *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 372. **361. Stand at bay.** Explain the figure. **384. Mount Alvernus**, a mountain in Campania, near the source of the Tiber. **384–389. As falls . . . head.** Explain the figure in detail.

XLVIII–LII. Give topic. **412–416. like . . . blood.** Explain the figure in detail. **421–424. And backward . . . reel.** Describe the picture. **431. Sextus** : see ll. 199–200, and l. 3 and note.

LIII–LVII. Give topic. **450. fall.** Why not *falls ?* **461. like a dam** Explain the comparison. **467–475. like a horse . . . to the sea.** Explain the figure in detail. **477. constant**, unmoved.

LVIII–LXIV. Give topic. **488. Palatinus**, one of the seven hills of Rome, on which, at this time, were the dwellings of most of the patricians. **492. father Tiber** : see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 365. **503. parted lips.** What is indicated by this ? **508. ranks of Tuscany**, *i.e.* the Etrurians. **519. evil case**, adverse circumstances. **526 ; 530. Curse on him ; Heaven help him.** Contrast the two men as seen here and in ll. 480, 482. **534–541. And now . . . crowd.** Explain effect of the present tenses in this stanza.

LXV–LXX. Give topic. **542. corn-land** : see note on l. 261. **546. molten image**, probably of bronze. **550. Comitium**, a place of public assembly in Rome, adjoining the Forum. **561. Volscian**, an important people of Latium, though not of the Latin race. They were constantly at war with the early Romans. **562. Juno**, the goddess of marriage and childbirth. See *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 22, 470. **572. Algidus**, a wooded mountain of Latium, not far from Rome. **574. oldest cask**, *i.e.* the best wine. **577. kid . . . spit.** A spit is a pointed stick or skewer on which meat (' the kid ') is roasted. **582. goodman**, master of the house. **587. told.** Name the dozen or more temporal clauses modifying ' told,' and describe the scenes of Roman home life which these clauses indicate.

What characteristics of the ballad does this poem possess ? Compare it,

in respect of verse and poetic style, with *The Lady of the Lake*. In what does its charm especially lie? (INTRODUCTION, §§ 6; 7; 24, 3, 5; 31, 3.)

TENNYSON

ŒNONE

Paris, son of Priam, was arbiter in the awarding of a golden apple inscribed "For the fairest," which Eris, or Discord, had thrown among the guests assembled at the nuptials of Peleus and Thetis. Juno, Minerva, and Venus each claimed the apple. For an account of this marriage feast and the fateful apple, see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 277–278. At this time Paris was living on Mt. Ida with the wife of his youth, the beautiful nymph Œnone. The reward which Venus gave him for his judgment in her favor brought about his desertion of Œnone — a situation which Tennyson seized upon for this, the earliest of his classical idyls. The poem is written in blank verse, a metre in which Tennyson afterward became especially proficient, undoubtedly excelling all poets since Milton. The poet worked out the plan for *Œnone* while on a tour of the Pyrenees with his friend Hallam, and much of the scenery in which the poem abounds is doubtless borrowed from those mountains. *Œnone* was first published in the volume of 1832,[1] but was somewhat altered in later editions. Sixty years later, the month of Tennyson's death witnessed the publication of a companion poem, *The Death of Œnone* — inferior, however, in every way to this poem of his early genius.

1–21. 1. **Ida.** A thickly wooded mountain range south of Troy. 2. **Ionian hills.** Where are these? 3–5. **The . . . drawn.** Describe the picture; also the picture of the whole landscape. 10. **Gargarus,** a high mountain in the range. 13. **Troas.** The district of northwestern Asia Minor between Ida and 'Ilion's columned citadel,' or Troy. Why is Troy called 'the crown of Troas'? 15. **Œnone**: see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 310. **forlorn,** in its radical sense of deserted or abandoned.

22–62. 22. **mother Ida.** Why mother? **many-fountained,** an epithet modelled after the Greek. Ida was formerly noted for its springs or fountains. 39–40. **as yonder walls Rose slowly**: see the story of the building of the walls of Troy through the music of Apollo's lyre, in *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 110, 169. 51. **Simois,** a river of Troas north of Mt. Ida.

63–100. 65. **Hesperian gold**: see Hesperides and the garden of golden apples, as well as the apple of Discord. *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 22, 219 220, 277–278. 67. **full-flowing river of speech.** Discuss the figure. 71. "**For the most fair**": see introduction to these notes. 72. **Oread.** For the mountain nymphs, see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 46. 74. **married brows.** What does the poet seem to mean by the epithet 'married'? 79. **Peleus,** father of Achilles. See introduction to notes. 81. **Iris.** For the light-footed

[1] This volume, entitled simply *Poems*, is often spoken of as "the volume of 1833," since that was the date on the title-page. The book made its appearance, however, in December, 1832.

goddess of the rainbow, see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 41. **83–84. Here, Pallas, Aphrodite.** Juno (Hera), Minerva, and Venus. **94. And . . . fire.** Explain.

101–131. **102. crested peacock,** a bird dear to Juno, and her frequent companion. **105. voice of her** : see Juno in *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 22. **112. champaign** : see note on *Horatius* (100). **126. shepherd.** At the birth of Paris it was prophesied that he would bring ruin to his country. He was accordingly left to perish on Mt. Ida, but was found and adopted into the family of a shepherd of the mountain. **130. Above the thunder.** Discuss this very expressive phrase.

132–167. **135. Pallas** : see Minerva in *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 23, and show how her speech is characteristic of her. **137. O'erthwarted . . . spear.** Minerva is frequently represented as carrying a spear transversely in her left hand. **142. Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control.** Discriminate. **144. not for power.** Syntax of this phrase? **151. Sequel of guerdon.** A favorable decision brought about by bribes or rewards could not make me other than I am. **161–164. until . . . freedom.** This is one of the most difficult passages in Tennyson. In trying to solve it, first determine the syntax of ' pure law ' ; then decide what the poet means by ' pure law ' and by ' perfect freedom ' ; finally hunt out the subject of ' commeasure ' and make sure what this verb means.

168–202. **170–171. Idalian Aphrodite . . . Paphian wells.** Aphrodite, the Greek name for Venus, signifies the foam-born, from the myth that she arose from the foam of the sea. Look up Venus in *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 31–34. Idalia and Paphos, cities of Cyprus, were dear to Venus. **183. wife,** Helen, then wife of Menelaus. See *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 278–279. **195. pard** : see note on *Ode to a Nightingale* (32). **196. Eyed . . . star.** Discuss the simile.

203–240. **204. They . . . pines.** Is this action related to the story of Troy? To whom does ' They ' refer? Discuss the fine picture of this stanza, particularly noting ' plumed ' (205), ' blue gorge ' (206), ' moon-lit slits ' (214), and ' trembling ' (215). **220. The Abominable,** Eris or Discord, the goddess of strife. **231–234. O . . . cloud.** Note how the effect of these apostrophes is heightened by the parallel construction.

241–264. **242. I will not die alone.** In *The Death of Œnone* (see introduction to notes), Œnone is made to perish upon the funeral pile of her faithless husband. **245. Dead sounds at night.** To what does this refer? Explain the simile in the following line. **247. My far-off doubtful purpose.** Explain. **254. their . . . laughter.** Whose? **259. the wild Cassandra** : see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 313. She was the daughter of Priam and had the gift of prophecy, but was fated to have all her predictions unbelieved. Although in the myth, Œnone had a like prophetic power, Tennyson wisely omits this characteristic as tending to detract from the beauty and simplicity of her nature. **261. armed men.** Cassandra had prophesied the siege and downfall of Troy.

Discuss the form of literature to which this poem belongs. Compare the blank verse, according to the principles mentioned in the INTRODUCTION, §§ 19; 20, 2, with that of 2 *Paradise Lost*. Also see § 30, 4.

THE LADY OF SHALOTT

Long before Tennyson had formulated his plans for the *Idylls of the King*, he had been attracted toward the legends of Arthur and his court. The first important fruitage of this interest was seen in the volume of 1832, in the mystical lyric, *The Lady of Shalott*. In this poem Tennyson caught the spirit of the old romance, and expressed it with a poetic grace and perfection of form which he rarely, if ever, afterward surpassed. Though an ethical interpretation of the symbolism has often been suggested, it is perhaps best not to imperil the simple ballad interest by attempting any detailed analysis of the possible mystical (or spiritual) meaning. It should be noted that ' Shalott ' is only another form of ' Astolat,' that its lady is the prototype of Elaine, and that this little lyric was afterward elaborated into what has been styled " the most idyllic and most touching of the *Idylls of the King*."

Part I. 5. **Camelot**, the mystical city where King Arthur held his court. See [Note II], p. 712, *Persons and Places* of the *Idylls of the King*. 9. **The island of Shalott.** But in *Lancelot and Elaine*, Astolat is not an island. 19. **margin**, of the river. 30. **cheerly**, an archaic form of cheerily. The archaic and purely artistic words of the poem make it more poetical, if less human and touching, than the *Elaine*.

Part II. 38. **A magic web.** Part II, with its magic web and mirror, may be intended to represent the world of images and shadows, the dream-life of childhood, beyond which for some mortals it is fatal to go. Part III, then, would be the awakening of passion, the escape into a world of realities — an escape that for the lady can mean only death. 40. **stay**, *i.e.* pause in her weaving. 52. **churls**, in its radical sense of rustics. 60. **mirror blue.** Why blue ?

Part III. 77. **Sir Lancelot**, the chief of Arthur's knights. Note that in this poem, even more than in the *Lancelot and Elaine*, the knight is guiltless of the maiden's death. 84. **Galaxy**, the Milky Way with its innumerable and indistinguishable stars. Look up derivation of word. 87. **baldric** : see note on *Prologue* (116). 96–99. **As . . . Shalott.** Analyze the figure. What is the purpose of so stressing the brightness of Lancelot and his equipment ? 111. **water-lily** : see l. 7. 114–115. **Out . . . side.** Significance of this ? 116. **The curse** : see l. 40.

Part IV. In the *Lancelot and Elaine* the lady is not set afloat upon the river until after her death. 121. **low sky raining.** Observe harmony between scene and action. 142. **willowy hills.** Discuss the epithet.

ULYSSES

The *Odyssey* (see *Cl. M.*, pp. 277–280, 318–345) brought the adventures of Ulysses, after the Trojan War, down to his return to Ithaca, and his retire-

ment in undisturbed possession of wife and kingdom. More than two thousand years later Dante in his *Inferno* took up the myth, and described how the ancient hero, growing tired of repose, collected his followers together, incited them to action by a stirring speech, constructed a fleet, and set sail for the " Happy Isles " of the western ocean. Tennyson here presents the speech by which Ulysses may be supposed to have aroused his men. This poem was first published in the volume of 1842.

1-32. **2. barren crags**, Ithaca, the kingdom of Ulysses, a rocky island off the west coast of Greece. **3. aged wife.** For Penelope, see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 279, 338–345. **10. Hyades.** This constellation under certain conditions indicates stormy weather. For origin of the constellation, see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, p. 152. **17. ringing plains.** Why ' ringing ' ? **19–21. Yet . . . move.** Explain the figure. **26. Little remains**, *i.e.* of his own life (l. 25). Perhaps not more than three years (l. 29) are still left to him.

33-70. **33. Telemachus** : see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 279, 339–343. **35. discerning to fulfil**, understanding how to carry out. **40. decent**, in its radical meaning, from Lat. *decens*. **53. strove**, in the Trojan War. See *Cl. M.*, pp. 284–285, 301, etc. **60–61. baths Of all the western stars.** The stars were supposed to set in the western ocean. See *Cl. M.*, p. 43. **62. gulfs . . . down.** This actually happened, according to Dante, for Ulysses never returned. **63. Happy Isles**, or Isles of the Blessed : see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 51–52. **64. Achilles** : see *Cl. D.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 269–274, 277–309, especially pp. 307–308.

BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

Composed, said Tennyson, " in a Lincolnshire lane at five o'clock in the morning between blossoming hedges." Printed in 1842.

SONGS FROM THE PRINCESS

These and three other songs were inserted in the third edition (1850) of Tennyson's poem on woman's rights, *The Princess*. They were not an afterthought. " Before the first edition came out I deliberated with myself whether I should put songs in between the separate divisions of the poem," (Tennyson). But the lyrics have a value quite independent of their setting. Like *Break, Break, Break* and *Crossing the Bar* they have become the language of the heart for Great Britain and America.

PROEM TO IN MEMORIAM

In Memoriam, Tennyson's greatest poem, is a tribute of love, lament, and meditation to his friend Arthur Henry Hallam, who died in 1833. The poem is a series of one hundred and thirty-one short lyrics which were written at different times, from the death of Hallam to their publication in 1850. The meditative character of this elegy consists of a profound questioning of the nature and significance of life, giving way at last to a sublime faith

in the providence of God and the immortality of the soul, — that faith which ministers the dearest hope and greatest comfort to the heart of one bereaved. In this proem, or apology, which is dated 1849, Tennyson gives utterance to his belief that Love is immortal, that God is good and merciful and that He in His wisdom, which we cannot fathom, has made the world as it is, including death (1–8); that divine providence (*cf.* note on *Paradise Lost* (25)) will not let the soul perish (9–12); that somehow or other we have the power to will to do right (13–16); that our systems of thought and social organization are but imperfect reflections of the great Spirit (17–20); and that human knowledge, necessarily limited, should increase, but with ever greater reverence for the mysteries beyond its ken — so that knowledge of the smaller reality and faith in the greater reality may be at one with each other (21–28). In conclusion the poet prays for greater faith and for divine mercy toward that which men call sin and merit (33–36). A clear message, that, for us of to-day with our overweening pride in scientific and material achievements !

The stanza used in this poem, which has come to be known as the *In Memoriam* stanza, was used by Lord Herbert of Cherbury (d. 1648) and Ben Jonson. Tennyson employed it as early as 1833 ; he thought he had invented it. As a medium for dignified reflection and noble passion, as used by Tennyson, it has few equals, but poets of less power find it monotonous and abrupt. Says one critic : " No one stanza was ever employed with such varying effect. And this is the more remarkable because its arrangement of rising and falling rhymes tends to close the quatrain and make its music isolated and monotonous, for the recurring central rhymes hold the rhythm in suspense till it falls again as the fourth rhyme recalls the first."

FLOWER IN THE CRANNIED WALL

First published in 1870. This poem of one stanza, irregular in form as it is and laden with an awkward phraseology in the last line, is nevertheless highly successful, chiefly, perhaps, because it puts in intimate figure, condensed form, and facile rhythm one of the commonest and best beloved ideas of popular philosophy, — that the secret of existence lies in all things alike. How do you interpret ' all in all ' in l. 5 ?

CROSSING THE BAR

This little poem was written over sixty years after the publication of Tennyson's first book of verse. It would be hard to imagine a more fitting climax to this long period of endeavor, or a more triumphant expression of the aged poet's simple faith, than is contained in these sixteen short lines. It has been called a poem above criticism, as beautiful an utterance as any in all the range of English verse — a poem in which, says Sir Alfred Lyall, " The noiseless indraw of the ebb-tide from the land back into the ocean is a magnificent image of the soul's quiet parting from life on earth and its absorption into the vastness of infinity."

Hallam Tennyson, in the memoirs of his father's life, has given the following account of the poem's composition : " *Crossing the Bar* was written in my father's eighty-first year, on a day in October when we came from Aldworth to Farringford. Before reaching Farringford he had the Moaning of the Bar in his mind, and after dinner he showed me this poem written out. I said, ' That is the crown of your life's work.' He answered, ' It came in a moment.' He explained the ' Pilot ' as that Divine and Unseen who is always guiding us. A few days before my father's death he said to me, ' Mind you put *Crossing the Bar* at the end of my poems.' "

BROWNING

SONGS FROM PIPPA PASSES

Browning's charming drama, *Pippa Passes*, from which these two stanzas are taken, was published in 1841. The drama is based upon the conception of "someone walking alone through life ; one apparently too obscure to leave a trace of his or her passage, yet exercising a lasting, though unconscious, influence at every step of it." It is thus that Pippa, a little ragged girl who works in the silk-mills of Asolo, in Northern Italy, passes by, singing her songs, without realizing that they have a determining influence in the lives of several men and women who have heard them. On her one holiday in the year she rises with our first song on her lips, — a song that gives the keynote to the play, for is not Pippa's singing a service that ranks high with God ? That she is unconscious of the service, — well, that is God's care — ' his puppets, best and worst, Are we.' There is another stanza to this song, but we have not quoted it because it has less of lyrical swing and spontaneity. By the stanza we have selected the song is known.

Pippa passes through the village, artlessly singing her way in and out of the lives of the leading characters of the play. She rests on a step and sings the second song, closing with those words that have become a part of the world's gospel : ' God's in his heaven — All's right with the world ! ' A man and a woman overhear her, and they suddenly turn from their sin to the realization of its tragic significance. " The little peasant's voice has righted all again." — ' Spring ' (7) of course means spring-time.

Professor Saintsbury, who is far from being a Browning enthusiast, says in his *History of Nineteenth Century Literature :* " It is as a lyric poet that Browning ranks highest ; and in this highest class it is impossible to refuse him all but the highest rank, in some few cases the very highest."

INCIDENT OF THE FRENCH CAMP

Published in 1842. The story, said to be true, though the actual hero was a man, is supposed to be told by a witness of the incident. Ratisbon (or Regensburg) is in Bavaria, on the south bank of the Danube. In April,

1809, it suffered severely in the fighting between Napoleon and the Austrians. 7–8. Notice the fanciful explanation of Napoleon's characteristic pose. **prone**, bending forward, *i.e.* the head bent forward. See the pictures of Napoleon. **Oppressive**, heavy, weighted down. 11–12. **let . . . Waver**, if he waver (subjunctive mood). **Lannes.** One of Napoleon's generals. 17–24. Note Browning's characteristic style, — abrupt and disjunctive. 29. **flag-bird.** Referring to the eagle on Napoleon's flag. **vans**, wings, — a derived meaning. See *Dict.* and *cf.* fan. 36. **bruised eaglet.** Note the appropriateness of the figure. — Browning's admiration of the heroic finds ready expression in this dramatic scene. For a fuller exposition of the value of the heroic, see the story of Hercules in Browning's *Balaustion's Adventure.* For this poem and the next, see INTRODUCTION, § 30, 7.

THE PATRIOT : AN OLD STORY

"An Old Story" in the sense that this sort of thing happens over and over again, — an aspect of the irony of fortune. Note the comfort the prisoner-patriot finds in his misfortunes : Had the world paid him better God might have had more to require of him (28–30).

HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD

Both this and *Home-Thoughts, from the Sea*, which follows, first appeared in 1845 in *Dramatic Romances and Lyrics.* Browning has shown no finer appreciation of the beauty and freshness of English springtide than in this little nature lyric. The words are uttered in a foreign land by one whose heart is yearning for the delights of the English spring.

4. **unaware**, unexpectedly. 11–14. **Hark . . . thrush.** The picture seems to be that of the thrush perching on the twig of the pear tree, and bending it down so violently that a shower of petals and dewdrops is scattered on the grass beneath. This description of the thrush who wants to prove his ability to repeat his song is as famous as it is charming.

HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM THE SEA

In this lyric we see a patriotic Englishman stirred by scenes which bring before his mind the glory of his country. Here is Gibraltar which, at the close of the eighteenth century, England successfully defended against the combined assaults of France and Spain. Here is Cape Trafalgar, where, in 1805, the brave Nelson defeated the French fleet (see note on Byron, stanzas from *Childe Harold*, The Ocean, l. 36; also note on Noyes, p. 728).

The metrical form of these lines is trochaic octameter catalectic, like that in Tennyson's *Locksley Hall.* 1–4. **Nobly . . . gray.** Describe the scene. Professor Corson points out that it forms "a characteristic Turner picture." 5–6. **say, Whoso turns.** Let him, whosoever turns as I, etc., — say. 7. **Jove's planet.** To what does the poet refer ?

MY LAST DUCHESS

My Last Duchess, published in 1842 in *Dramatic Lyrics*, is one of the earliest specimens of a kind of poetry in which Browning was destined to excel. This, "the poet's favorite art form," is known as the "dramatic monologue." In it some speaker appears, talking not to himself as in a soliloquy, but to a silent second person whose presence is to be inferred from the words of him who speaks. The monotony of a soliloquy is avoided by this means, since the interest consists not only in revealing the character of the speaker, but also in suggesting the effect which his arguments or appeals make upon the imaginary hearer. Sometimes the speaker directs a question to his auditor; sometimes he answers a look or gesture; at all times he speaks in his own character — and hence such a poem does not necessarily give any hint of the real thoughts or feelings of the poet himself. The dramatic monologue constituted a large part of Browning's poetry. It is generally written in blank verse, though in the present instance it rhymes in couplets.

Nowhere has Browning made more artistic or effective use of this method than in *My Last Duchess*. The speaker is the Duke of Ferrara, an arrogant and cold-hearted Italian, whose only interests are his pride of aristocratic lineage and his satisfaction in the treasures of art which he has collected. One of the paintings in which he takes most pleasure — because of its æsthetic qualities, not from any other emotion than those aroused by the contemplation and possession of rare and beautiful art — is a portrait of his young wife who has recently died. The envoy of a certain wealthy count has come to him to conclude arrangements for a new marriage between the widowed duke and the count's daughter. This little matter of business being finished to the duke's satisfaction, the latter good-naturedly and complacently entertains his guest by showing him through his picture gallery and explaining as they proceed. (On the dramatic monologue, see INTRODUCTION, § 31, 9; also § 30, 4, 7.)

1–21. 3. **Fra Pandolf**, a name of the poet's invention. 'Fra' signifies brother, denoting that this imaginary artist was a monk. **5–6. I said . . . design.** From the 'depth and passion' of the portrait one might think that the artist was enamored of the Duchess. So the duke is accustomed to emphasize the fact that the painter was '*Fra* Pandolf,' whose monastic vows should preclude any such possibility. **9–10. since . . . I.** "It's too precious a work of art to be intrusted to anybody else" (Corson). 'But' here is used adverbially in the sense of *only;* hence the nominative 'I.' See note on *Horatius* (355).

21–34. Characterize the Duchess as portrayed in these lines. **25. favor**, some gift, such as a jewelled breast-pin. **33. nine-hundred-years-old name**: see introduction to notes.

34–47. Characterize the duke from his unconscious portrayal of himself. **40. lessoned**, taught or instructed. **45. I gave commands.** It was doubt-

less the tone and spirit of the commands, rather than the words, that crushed the young wife's spirit. **46. Then all smiles stopped together.** On these words Berdoe remarks, " The concentrated tragedy of this line is a good example of the poet's power of compressing a whole life's story into two or three words."

47-56. Show the artistic effect of thus abruptly dismissing the subject, and turning to the business at hand. **54-55. Notice . . . sea-horse.** Several commentators have suggested that in these lines there is a " reference to the way he has tamed and killed his lady." Would this interpretation be artistic? For what evident reason were the lines introduced? **56. Claus of Innsbruck,** another imaginary artist.

ANDREA DEL SARTO

This poem, published in *Men and Women* (1855), is one of Browning's best and most characteristic dramatic monologues. Andrea del Sarto (Andrew, son of the tailor), as he was nicknamed by his contemporaries, was born in Florence in 1487. After an apprenticeship as goldsmith and wood-carver he studied art, and, by the time of his early manhood, became known as " the faultless painter." The spiritual element is supposed to be lacking in his work, but in technique and accuracy of drawing he had hardly an equal. When twenty-five years of age he married a certain Lucrezia, a woman of wonderful physical beauty, but dishonest, vain, extravagant, and with a soul utterly incapable of appreciating her husband's art.

In 1518 the French king, Francis I, who had seen some of Andrea's work, invited him to Paris to paint in the French court. Here the artist spent several of the best months of his life, " painted proudly and prospered every way." But before long his wife wrote to him from Florence, urging him to come home. The king agreed to this, on condition that he soon return; and, moreover, entrusted him with a large sum of money, with which he was to purchase in Italy works of art to be brought back to France Lucrezia, finding out that he had this money, persuaded him to appropriate it to building a house for himself in Florence. Even after he had done this he was inclined to go back to France to take his punishment; but the entreaties of his wife, and his infatuation for her, decided otherwise. Andrea is conceived by Browning as never rising beyond the sphere of technical correctness, — as " faultless " but uninspired to the last. Still there are paintings of his that might justify one in disagreeing with this verdict. He died of the plague in 1531, at the early age of forty-three, his wife surviving him for over forty years.

Just how far Andrea's genius was blighted by this unhappy marriage is an open question, and has formed a frequent theme for discussion. Some critics insist that Browning's poem lays the shortcomings of Andrea rather at his own door than at that of Lucrezia. One commentator, after a study of the poem, declares, " No woman ruined his soul; he had no soul to ruin." Suffice it to say that, although his wife was notoriously false to him, he toiled

for her, loved her, and clung to her to the end. She was the model for many of his pictures, and it was from one of these pictures that Browning got the idea for his poem. Mr. John Kenyon, a friend of the Brownings, had asked the poet to procure for him a copy of the portrait of Andrea del Sarto and Lucrezia, painted by Andrea, and now in a gallery of Florence. No copy could be found, however ; so Browning wrote and sent as a substitute this poem, which was intended to represent what he himself had got out of (or read into) this portrait of husband and wife. The scene is an open window of the house in Florence which had been built with the stolen gold. The time is evening. The painter is speaking in answer to his wife's demand for money for her lover (or ' cousin,' as she styles him).

1–32. 5–7. **I'll . . . price.** What do these lines suggest as to Andrea's present ideals of his art ? Show how the opening lines strike the keynote of the whole poem. 15. **Fiesole** (pronounced Fē-ā′zō-lc), a little city about three miles from Florence, built upon a hill above the river Arno. 16. **use,** are accustomed to do. 23–25. **you . . . model** : see introduction to these notes.

33–53. 35. **A common grayness.** This tone was characteristic in much of Andrea's painting. 41–42. **chapel top . . . convent-wall,** evidently just opposite the artist's home. 49–53. **Love . . . lie.** One editor says, " This is not piety, but Andrea's characteristic way of evading responsibility." Do you agree ?

54–103. 54. **You don't understand** : see introduction to notes. 57. **cartoon** : see *Dict.* for definition of this word in this, its original sense. 60–67. **I can do . . . all of it** : see introduction to notes. 76–82. **Yet do much less . . . hand of mine** : see introduction to notes. Professor Dowden quotes as follows from Vasari, " Had this master possessed a somewhat bolder and more elevated mind, had he been as much distinguished for higher qualifications as he was for genius, he would, beyond all doubt, have been without an equal." But despite the matchless technique of Del Sarto, his was, after all, only a ' low-pulsed craftsman's hand.' In a word, he is represented as lacking soul. 83–87. **Their works . . . sit here.** Discuss this passage. 90–96. **I . . . care.** Morello is one of the peaks of the Apennines, north of Florence. Men may criticise its hue or outline if they wish, but the mountain is indifferent to it — is above criticism. How does Andrea apply this illustration to his own case ?

104–144. 105. **The Urbinate.** Raphael, born at Urbino, 1483, was one of the greatest of Italian painters. He died in 1520. Accordingly, the date of this monologue is fixed at 1525, six years before Andrea's death. 106. **George Vasari.** Giorgio Vasari (1512–1574), who was once a pupil of Andrea, in his *Lives of the Artists*, is the one great original authority for the biographies of Italian painters. 108. **with kings and popes to see.** Much of Raphael's best work was the frescoing of the rooms and corridors of the Vatican. His art was distinguished by wonderful dignity, reserve, and nobility of soul, which Andrea recognizes as far outweighing his own technical skill.

110. for it gives way. He attains heaven by reaching ' above ' and ' through' his art. **120. Nay, Love,** evidently in reply to a gesture on the part of Lucrezia. **130. Agnolo.** Michael Angelo (or, more correctly, Agnolo) was born in 1475, and died, when nearly ninety years of age, in 1564. He was both sculptor and painter, and excelled equally in technical skill and grandeur of conception. His greatest work was the decoration of the Sistine Chapel.

145–176. **146. Paris lords,** who knew of the embezzlement of the money entrusted to him by King Francis. See introduction to notes. **150. Fontainebleau,** a town some forty miles from Paris, containing a famous palace of the French kings. **166. And had you not grown restless** : see introduction to notes. **173. there,** in your heart. These lines are regarded by some as an example of Browning's obscurity. Are they susceptible of more than one interpretation ? Browning afterward changed the words ' have ended ' to ' reach and stay.' Discuss whether this alteration throws light upon the meaning.

177–210. **177–179. Rafael . . . wife,** the words with which men will ' excuse ' him. Raphael's Madonna is more spiritual, — better fitted for religious devotions, — since Andrea's was modelled on an earthly love. **178. The Roman's.** The latter years of Raphael's life were spent in Rome. **186–187. When . . . see** : see note on l. 108. **199. What he ?** In Andrea's childlike eagerness to recount to his wife the story of this splendid compliment, he has failed to notice that she is paying no attention. **201. chance, so lost.** To what does he refer ? **202. Is,** the subject is ' all I care for ' (198). **207. I mean . . . more.** Point out the pathos of this line. **210. cue-owls,** owls common to Mediterranean regions. Their name is derived from their peculiar cry. The English name for them is scops-owl.

211–243. **212–213. house We built** : see introduction to notes. **218. gold I did cement them with.** Explain the figure. **219. Must you go ?** The lover for whom Lucrezia has been seeking money here summons her by whistling. See l. 267. **241. scudi.** A *scudo* (pl. *scudi*) is an Italian silver coin, worth about a dollar.

244–267. **250. My . . . want.** Vasari says that Andrea abandoned his " poor father and mother " when he became infatuated with Lucrezia. **255–256. Some . . . try.** Let some good son try to paint. **259. here,** on earth. **261–262. Four . . . reed** : see *Revelation* xxi. 15–17. **263. Leonard,** Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519), who shares with Raphael and Michael Angelo the distinction of being the greatest among Italian artists. With his *Last Supper* painting in Italy probably reached its zenith.

RABBI BEN EZRA

Ben Ezra, as Browning has called him, — though more properly Ibn Ezra or Abenezra, — was a learned Jewish rabbi who was born at Toledo in Spain, about 1092, and died, probably at Rome, about 1167. He was a poet of some ability, an eminent scholar, and a distinguished thinker. He left Spain in 1140 on account of an outbreak against the Jews, and, though a great

traveller, spent much of the rest of his life in Italy. As far as can be judged from what we know of Ben Ezra, the beliefs assigned to him in this poem were very like the creed of his actual teaching. He is said to have had faith in a future life ; to have insisted upon freedom of thought ; to have taught that the higher, or spiritual, soul of man is in eternal conflict with the lower, or animal, soul, — the passions and desires ; and to have held that old age, when wisdom has triumphed over passion, is the most important period of man's activity. Indeed, it has been said that in the case of Ben Ezra himself all of his writing was done after he had reached his fiftieth year.

This poem was first published in the *Dramatis Personæ* of 1864. Its poetic style differs widely from that of the blank verse ordinarily used by Browning, and may profitably be studied with a view to the harmonies of sound and sense. Though *Rabbi Ben Ezra* is unquestionably difficult, it is at the same time of great nobility of thought and marked originality. It shows Browning as a profound and yet poetic reasoner. Through the rabbi the poet is giving us much of his own philosophy of life ; and every careful reader will find here a lesson that should hearten, comfort, and sustain.

1–30. 1. **Grow . . . me.** Ben Ezra in his old age is supposed to be addressing a youth. Survey life with me, he says, and you will see that it is best and fullest in its last years. Thus the poem opens with a glorification of old age. 7–11. **Not that . . . Youth sighed ; Not that . . . it yearned.** These clauses are objects of ' remonstrate ' (15). These hopes and indecisions of youth, though they render his ' brief years ' more or less profitless, are really valuable as furnishing his chief distinction from the lower forms of life (16–18). 24. **Irks . . . beast,** does care irk, etc.? The bird and the beast are troubled by no doubts, no " obstinate questionings." Their material comfort is to them the end of life. 29–30. **Nearer . . . believe.** Point out the reasoning by which we are shown to be allied to God rather than to the lower animals.

31–60. 39. **Shall . . . fail.** Not achievement but aspiration and effort are the measures of success. The brute creation may achieve its own perfection — may get all it aims for, but its aims are low. 44. **Whose . . . suit,** whose soul is satisfied with providing creature comforts. 49. **Yet gifts . . . use.** The perfect bodily powers given to us must and can justify their existence. 50–51. **I own . . . power.** The earlier part of man's life gives him power ; it is the time of struggle and achievement, the time when man ' lives and learns.' 52. **dole,** derived from deal ; *i.e.* the share dealt out. 57. **I . . . too.** The latter part of man's life teaches him Love as a necessary complement to the power. Both are motive forces of the universe.

61–102. 61. **pleasant is this flesh.** The ascetic is not the true ideal of manhood ; the body in its place is good and beautiful, and we should not allow ourselves to believe (67–72) that our soul's success is *in spite of* the body. 75. **term,** a resting-place or limit. 76. **Thence,** *i.e.* from youth, after having received the inheritance of the wisdom of maturity. Lessons have been learned (54) which make the life of the man wiser and his actions surer

than in youth. This is the time (85–90) for self-testing. **84. indue**, in its radical sense (Lat. *induere*). See *Dict.* **91–96. For . . . day.** When evening is about to fade into night, a brief moment seems to delay the deepening gloom ('the deed'). Analyze the metaphor and make its application. Whence comes the 'whisper from the west' (94)? **98. lifted o'er its strife.** *i.e.* the calm of old age. **100. rage**, eager passion or desire.

103–150. 106. Here, in old age. **109–114. As . . . Further.** These lines furnish a suggestive antithesis between the respective functions of youth and of old age. **110. acts uncouth**, hesitating and clumsy endeavors. *Cf.* note on ll. 7–11. **113. tempt**, make trial — the radical meaning of the word. **115–120. Enough . . . alone.** Thus old age is the proper time for absolute knowledge. It has no concern with the noisy uncertainties of youth. This confidence of old age gives it serenity, the "faith that looks through death," the "philosophic mind" of which Wordsworth, too has spoken. Only in old age, accordingly, — the time of this "absolute knowledge" of the soul, — can we take the proper measure of our past endeavors, discover whether we or our adversaries were right (124–132). **121–122. Be there . . . small.** Let there be at last a judgment as to the greatness or littleness of man's actions in the past. **124, 125. I, they.** Understand 'whom' after each word. Browning frequently suppresses the relative. **133–138. Not . . . trice.** Performance — actual things accomplished — is not the measure of success, despite the world's opinion to the contrary. **139–150. But all . . . God** : *cf.* note to l. 39. Also *cf.* with this passage *Lyc.* (78–84). **141. passed**, passed over through lack of proper estimate. **150. whose wheel the pitcher shaped.** This introduces the fine metaphor of the Potter's wheel with which the poem ends. See *Isaiah* lxiv. 8 and *Jeremiah* xviii. 2–6. God is the Potter. We, fixed to the wheel of life or time, are the clay which he shapes to his own uses. See the cut under *Potter's wheel* in the *Century* or some other dictionary. Our doubts and fears, joys and desires, perplexities and agonizings after truth, pressing upon us as the wheel revolves, serve as machinery meant to turn forth the clay (that is, the human soul) in the form fit for the Potter's service. Thus the actually permanent is secured through what we had regarded as circumstance and change.

151–192. 154–156. Thou . . . seize to-day, an apostrophe to the believer in that kind of Epicurean philosophy which lives only in the present; thinks all things change and pass away; does not realize the permanence of the soul's achievements. **165. This Present . . . fain arrest**, as indicated in the speech of l. 156. **168. impressed**, moulded or shaped. **169–174. What . . . stress.** The ornamentations on the cup. The earlier grooves are made by the pressure of the Potter's tool upon our youthful lives. The skull-things proceed from the sterner pressure of the tool in our later years. But neither the Cupids at the base nor the skull-things at the rim of the pitcher are the end for which it was made. Its end is to be used as a drinking vessel at which the Master may slake his thirst (175–180). Dis-

cuss in general the figure of the cup, its ornamentations, and its uses. Especially explain l. 180. **179. Master's lips.** Mankind is being shaped for future communion with God. See *Matthew* xxvi. 29. **185. With . . . rife.** What is meant by these 'shapes and colors'? **186. my end, to slake Thy thirst.** That is to say, "man's chief end is to glorify God"; but to this function the Shorter Catechism wisely adds the compensation, "and to enjoy Him forever." Neither face of the shield is complete without the other. **190. My times be in Thy hand**: *cf. Psalms* xxiv. 15. **191. Perfect,** a verb. **192. Let age . . . the same.** Thus it is age, and age alone, which is able to understand the significance of the whole of life. Accordingly for the youth whom the rabbi is addressing —

> "The best is yet to be,
> The last of life for which the first was made."

Point out the stanzas that show the meaning of life to be the education and maturing of the soul; also those that suggest the doctrine of immortality. Does the rabbi make any allowance for the free action of the human will in this development of the human soul? Indicate lines that may be regarded as touchstones. See INTRODUCTION, § 34.

PROSPICE

First printed in *The Atlantic Monthly*, vol. xiii, June, 1864, p. 694; written in 1861, following the death of the poet's wife. The poem is a noble, inspiring expression of Browning's defiance of death and of his belief in personal immortality. —

Prospice, Look forward! Expression of the expectation of the soul's victory over death. **1–12.** The approach of death described in various figures — fog and mist, snows and winds (blasts, l. 3): these will tell him that he is near the very place (4), the midmost darkness and storm (5), the very post (6) of death, the great foe, the Arch Fear (7), with whom the supreme battle must be waged before the supreme reward can be won (11–12). Shall he fear all this? **13–28.** The answer: he has ever been a fighter, — 'so one fight more, The best and the last' (13–14); he would hate to be saved the consciousness of dying (15–16); he would meet death heroically, encountering all of pain and darkness he needs must ('glad life's arrears,' — the pain he has as yet escaped), for all turns to the best for the brave, and after the pain of death will come peace and reunion with his wife (27–28).

1. To make the construction clear supply 'Shall I be afraid' before 'to feel.' **5–6. power . . . press . . . post.** Objects of "nearing' (4), coördinate with 'place' (4), and followed by the adverbial clause, 'Where he stands' (7). **23. fiend-voices.** Figurative for the pains and struggles of death, which change into peace and light (25, 26).

EPILOGUE (TO ASOLANDO)

Like Tennyson's *Crossing the Bar*, this *Epilogue* may be regarded as a valedictory — a great poet's last message to the world. Berdoe says in his *Browning Cyclopedia* that the volume containing these lines " was published in London on the very day on which the poet died in Venice." The following reference to this poem is also quoted from the *Pall Mall Gazette* of February 1, 1890. It was one evening just before his death illness that Browning was reading to his daughter-in-law and sister, from the printer's proof sheets, the third stanza of this *Epilogue*. " He said, ' It almost looks like bragging to say this, and as if I ought to cancel it ; but it's the simple truth ; and as it's true, it shall stand.' His faith knew no doubting. In all trouble, against all evil, he stood firm." This *Epilogue* was written in Browning's extreme old age, and sums up magnificently the aim and spirit of the poet's whole life. ' Strive and thrive — fight on ' is the noble and characteristic trumpet-call which we find in this, the last line of his last poem. It was a call which he had been sounding, in one form or another, for nearly sixty years.

ARNOLD

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

The Forsaken Merman, though by no means the deepest or most pretentious of Arnold's poems, is, nevertheless, one of the most imaginative and musical, and unquestionably the best known and most popular. The causes of its popularity are not far to seek. The music of its rhythm is exquisite. The pictures it presents are clear and definite. Its element of pathos is supremely touching and rings true. The ethical problem involved is not obtruded on the reader, yet is the vital motive of the poem. Has this mother saved her soul by her action, and, if so, was it worth saving ? A woman is married to a merman. Happiness is theirs until the wife discovers that continuance in this unhallowed union will involve the loss of her soul. And so it is that —

" She left lonely for ever
The kings of the sea."

The Forsaken Merman was written in 1849 and published in Arnold's first book of poems.

1–47. 6. wild white horses. The merman and his children have left their sea-caves and approach the shore, where they are surrounded by the foamy breakers of the surf. See l. 21. **26. little grey church** : see ll. 56–59. **34. silver bell** : see l. 54. What is gained by introducing the sound of the church bell into this passage ? **37. spent**, in passing through the water. **42. mail**, the scales which cover and protect the snakes. **45. aye.** This word is frequently mispronounced. With which line does it rhyme ?

48–84. 53–54. She combed . . . far-off bell. Show how this couplet suggests the whole tragedy of the poem. **61. kind sea-caves.** Why ' kind '?

64. were we long alone ? What are we to understand by this question, and by the other so often repeated, — ' was it yesterday ? ' How long has she really been gone ? **68. down.** Meaning ? **69. sea-stocks.** A flowering plant growing upon the seacoasts of certain countries. **72–82. From the church . . . shut stands the door.** Contrast the two pictures, — the one outside the church, the other inside.

85–107. Draw the picture of the mother as outlined in the first and the last half of this stanza. How reconcile ' joyfully ' (88 and 95) with ' sigh ' (101 and 105)? Is it a change of mood, or is one of the moods only pretended and not real ? Does the merman *see* this or only imagine it ? **91. holy well,** evidently a well of miraculous powers near the church of the little ' white-walled town.'

108–143. 118. A ceiling of amber, thus contrasting the peacefulness of their sea home with the storms of the upper air. **124. But,** etc. Does this conjunction indicate that the two stanzas are to be contrasted ? If so, what are the elements of contrast ? Compare the songs which end each stanza. **127. spring-tides,** the tides which happen at, or soon after, the new and the full moon. But this is high tide. What, then, can the poet mean by ' low ' ? **129. heaths starred with broom.** Look up words and describe picture. **131. blanched.** Explain.

TO MARGUERITE

Published 1852. This is one of Arnold's most exquisite lyrics, — profound in thought, impassioned, rich in images, and mellifluous. To the philosophical conception of the essential unity of all things there seems to be added here a personal yearning, a ' longing like despair,' to come into sympathetic, intimate relationship with one's fellows.

RUGBY CHAPEL

The chapel at Rugby is the burial place of Matthew Arnold's father, Dr. Thomas Arnold, the famous headmaster of the school, and known to all boys as " the Doctor " of *Tom Brown's School Days at Rugby*. Dr. Arnold was born on the Isle of Wight, 1795, and was educated at Winchester and at Oxford, where, at the age of twenty, he became a Fellow of Oriel. After leaving Oxford, in 1819, he opened a private school at Laleham on the Thames, which he conducted for nine years, and from which he was elected to the position of headmaster at Rugby. Rugby at that time ranked far below the more important English public schools, such as Eton, Harrow, and Winchester. The moral tone of the school was bad ; the standards were low ; self-indulgence, lawlessness, and contempt for authority were characteristics common among the boys. Such, however, was Arnold's ability, tact, and energy that within the fourteen years of his headmastership he raised Rugby to a place among the best of English schools, and gave it a name for inspiring in its boys seriousness of purpose and high ideals of Christian manhood.

Rugby Chapel was written in November, 1857, when the elder Arnold had been dead fifteen years. At the time of his father's death Matthew Arnold, then a student at Oxford, was in his twentieth year. Much of his boyhood and youth had been spent in the companionship and under the guidance of his father, and this poem, accordingly, has a deeper and tenderer significance than belongs to most elegies. (On assonance, see INTRODUCTION, § 23, 3.)

1–36. What is the metre of *Rugby Chapel*, what effect does the swing of the lines produce, and how is this effect suited to the subject and the mood of the poem? Does the absence of rhyme detract from the effect? It may be noted that Arnold has used the same metrical system in other elegiac poems — such as *Heine's Grave* and *Haworth Churchyard*. **1–13. Coldly . . . laid.** Describe the scene as given in this first stanza. **16–17. That word . . . Brings thee back.** How does the word 'gloom' bring back his father? **30. Sudden.** Dr. Arnold died of heart disease, June 12, 1842, when only in his forty-seventh year.

37–57. Matthew Arnold was most liberal in his religious beliefs. Many tenets that some Christians regard as vital were not so to him; but rarely in any poet do we find a belief in a future life stronger or more nobly expressed than in this passage. Arnold, however, was not always so sure.

58–123. **58–72. What is . . . gone.** Characterize and describe the type of mankind described in this division. **73–83. And . . . grave.** Likewise characterize this class of men and show their aims. **80–81. Not . . . Fruitless,** not to die fruitless without action. In the same way other obscurities of the poem may be cleared up by simple transposition of words. **84–109. We . . . rocks.** Show what experiences of life are symbolized by the various details of this fine metaphor, *e.g.* what is meant by the 'path' (84), the 'goal' (85), the 'gorges' (88), the 'storm' (90), etc.? **110. gaunt and taciturn host.** For what does this 'host' stand?

124–144. In the metaphor of these lines the poet beautifully suggests the secret of his father's greatness. Point out the characteristics of Dr. Arnold, here outlined, which distinguish his life from such a life as that described in ll. 117–123.

145–170. It is everywhere Matthew Arnold's teaching that the world can be saved only through its few supremely noble men, 'helpers and friends of mankind.' How has his father's life enforced this belief? **168. Yours is the praise,** *i.e.* it is due to you.

171–208. In these lines the poet reverts to his metaphor of the journey of life (ll. 84–109), and indicates the work in store for those 'Servants of God' whose souls are of the same heroic mould as that of Dr. Arnold.

DOVER BEACH

In his *Primer of English Literature*, Stopford Brooke says of Arnold, "He embodied in his poetry, even in his early book of 1852, the restlessness, the dimness, the hopelessness of a world which had lost the vision of the ancient stars and could cling to nothing but a stoic conduct." In none of

Arnold's poems is this view more clearly expressed than in *Dover Beach*. The dominant note of the poem is despair, yet there is a hint of the fortitude, the patience, the perseverance with which it is necessary for man to bear his lot. The poem is especially notable for its restraint of utterance and stoical self-repression and resignation. In all ways it is thoroughly characteristic of a large part of Arnold's poetical work. It originally formed part of the volume of 1867.

The first stanza in wonderfully musical lines paints the scene before the poet. But what is the prevailing note of the division? What is the 'thought' referred to in l. 19? Explain the metaphor of the third division and show what Arnold means by this ebbing of 'the sea of faith.' What are the 'naked shingles of the world' (28)? In the fourth division can you find any hope in the midst of the 'confused alarms'? Help, Arnold always taught, must come from the soul itself. What is meant in l. 37 by the 'ignorant armies'?

REQUIESCAT

In this almost perfect dirge, attention need be called only to the melancholy music of the verse and to the rare taste which is shown in the choice of title. *Requiescat* — May she rest — is a wish exquisitely appropriate for her whose 'heart was tired' and whose soul 'yearning' for peace.

MEREDITH

JUGGLING JERRY

This poem was first published in 1859. The old juggler, dying, addresses his wife of many years. Reminiscent, justifying his calling and his love of the open road, murmuring his views of life, of human nature and God, fondly comforting his companion, hinting at immortality, stout-hearted Jerry — tender, sincere, and quaintly humorous — meets his death like the brave gentleman he is. This manly and pathetic poem is keenly true to the unconscious nobility of strong hearts and simple minds. Clean with the savor of 'God's great house on a blowing day,' it expresses what is at the heart of all Meredith's best work, — a profound apprehension of the wonder and the beauty, the comedy and the tragedy of life, a splendid acquiescence in the facts of existence, a consciousness of the need for brave struggle, and even though we may not assert what lies beyond this life, a faith like that of Browning's Pippa: "God's in his heaven, All's right with the world." — Both this poem and the next are dramatic monologues, after the fashion of Browning's *My Last Duchess*. What other similarities to that poet's style do you detect in *Juggling Jerry* and *Martin's Puzzle?*

7. **One that outjuggles**, Death. Jerry, himself a juggler, sees the game of life as a vast sleight-of-hand contest in which physical fitness, mental alertness, and courage and good humor, too, win the day — until Death, the Great Juggler, outwits us all and seizes us for his own. But before we finish the story we are aware of a higher Power, the Lord to whom the lease

of life belongs and who, as Jerry thinks, may yet rescue us from the 'black hollow' into which Death seems to draw us down. **spying**, has had his eye upon me. **9. times**, many times. **10. gorse**, furze. **24. safe**, certain. **25. cricket.** Verb. **26. wide**, far. **27.** Cricket terms; see *Dict.* **30. halts**, stops. **34. bait for the fool**, allure the fool by a bait. **43.** Explain the line. **45. the professor**, *i.e.* the juggler. **48.** Ironical. They praise him for tricking them: there's a commentary for you! **49. topsy-turvy.** Referring to the upside-down artifices, the wiles and hoaxes, of the conjurer's craft. **67. bolus.** Distinguish between pill and bolus; see *Dict.* **76.** You shan't have to beg for the leavings in troughs and tubs. **81. chirper.** The tankard or mug of ale, so named from the 'chirping' of the lips as the drinker imbibes. **84. The Lord must have his lease**, *i.e.* must have back the lease of life He grants to each. **85–86.** Maybe the black hollow of death is but a place where we are held as a pledge to be redeemed in God's good time. **87–88.** When Death goes through the form of swallowing us up, perhaps it's only a seeming: Jerry's quaint faith in Providence. **I ain't quite gone.** No, Death hasn't got me yet! **90. Gold-like.** The furze has yellow flowers. **94. heath**, open, uncultivated land (see *Dict.*). **95. it.** The change of death, now overtaking him.

MARTIN'S PUZZLE

This poem was first published in 1865. Martin, the cobbler, has a puzzle: how to "justify the ways of God to men," — in particular to poor little Molly, who is horribly maimed. His puzzle is increased by the 'wonderful stuff' of Molly, who talks like a song, and whose voice takes your ear like the ring of a glass. After he has cast aside as unsatisfactory several explanations of why such suffering should exist — really, of why there should be evil in the world — Martin (in the last stanza) lights on an idea the grandeur of which almost blinds him, and he is content to worship the good God with the childlike trust of Molly. — The thought of the poem may here and there be a little difficult, but the expression is so simple and clear that notes may be practically dispensed with. The juggler and cobbler — Jerry and Martin — are men of simple, direct minds, both aware of the mystery of life. What is the difference between them? Is Jerry's answer to the problem the same as Martin's? **12.** The father was so careless about the injury that the girl's leg had to be amputated. **31. near on**, etc.: When I'm just about to solve the puzzle.

LOWELL

THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL

The Vision of Sir Launfal was written in 1848, when Lowell was only in his thirtieth year. This poem has been very justly praised as one of the best America has ever produced; indeed, in many respects, it deserves to rank very high among the noblest poems of the English language. It has been

said that it was composed in a single day ; that its author became so absorbed in his theme that he hurried it to completion almost without pause. Traces of this haste may possibly be detected in a certain lack of unity. Critics have pointed out, for instance, that the two preludes, though in themselves charming little nature poems, are not sufficiently vital to the story as a whole. Though this may be true, it is doubtless equally true that no one would be willing to dispense with these preludes or to change them in any important particular. Stedman, in his *Poets of America*, expresses the belief " that *The Vision of Sir Launfal* owed its success quite as much to a presentation of nature as to its misty legend. It really is," he continues, " a landscape poem of which the lovely passage, ' And what is so rare as a day in June ? ' and the wintry prelude to Part Second are the specific features."

The Vision of Sir Launfal is, however, much more than that. In spite of its " misty " medieval setting, the poem is essentially ethical, and as such is far greater than any mere " landscape poem." Its theme is the brotherhood of man, a revelation of that ' thread of the all-sustaining beauty which runs through all and doth all unite,' a contrast between a true ideal of the service of God and a false ideal of that service, a portrayal of that charity which " suffereth long and is kind." So much for its teaching. As to its art, *The Vision of Sir Launfal* is one of the most purely poetical of all Lowell's poems. The diction, the figurative language, the music of the verse, the exquisite setting of the story, the fitting expression of keen insight and tender human sympathy — all unite to make this poem a masterpiece.

Lowell has left the following account of the Holy Grail, whose quest forms the *motif* for his plot :—

" According to the mythology of the Romancers, the San Greal, or Holy Grail, was the cup out of which Jesus Christ partook of the last supper with his disciples. It was brought into England by Joseph of Arimathea, and remained there, an object of pilgrimage and adoration, for many years in the keeping of his lineal descendants. It was incumbent upon those who had charge of it to be chaste in thought, word, and deed ; but one of the keepers having broken this condition, the Holy Grail disappeared. From that time it was a favorite enterprise of the Knights of Arthur's court to go in search of it. Sir Galahad was at last successful in finding it, as may be read in the seventeenth book of the Romance of King Arthur. Tennyson has made Sir Galahad the subject of one of the most exquisite of his poems.

" The plot (if I may give that name to anything so slight) of the following poem is my own, and, to serve its purposes, I have enlarged the circle of competition in search of the miraculous cup in such a manner as to include not only other persons than the heroes of the Round Table, but also a period of time subsequent to the date of King Arthur's reign."

Thus we see that this is not an Arthurian legend ; nor is it in the strictest sense of the word a story of knightly adventure. At the same time it is sufficiently tinged with the spirit of old romance to be included properly among these " poems of chivalry."

1–8. This may be called a general prelude to the poem, and really precedes " Prelude to Part First." Show the relation to the poem and trace the figure running through these lines, noting that the chords struck by the organist symbolize similar chords sounded by the poet in his preludes, each chord bringing him nearer to his ultimate theme. What is the versification of these lines? **4. bridge.** What is this bridge and what does it span? Trace the steps by which the poet conducts the reader over this bridge from his everyday world to the world of the vision. The story is rich in poetic figures and memory-images; the student should apply in the analysis of them the paragraphs on Imagination and Figures in INTRODUCTION, §§ 6–8.

9–32. 9–12. The *first* chord struck by the poet. **9–10. Not . . . lie,** suggested by Wordsworth's *Ode* on the *Intimations of Immortality*, Stanza V, especially l. 67. But the older poet's thought (see notes on *Ode*, Stanzas V and VI) is very different from that of Lowell, who is saying that we fail to see heaven, not because we have forgotten it, but because we are willfully blind to it. **12. Sinais climb,** *i.e.* get face to face with God. See *Exodus* xix. 17–20. **13–20.** The *second* chord. Explain its relation to the preceding lines. **13. manhood,** the emphatic word of the line. Why? **14. fallen,** from what? **traitor,** to what? **15. prophecies,** of what? **16. mountain.** Observe the contrasts, in all these lines, between nature and man, *e.g.* the firm and stable 'mountain' striving with the 'faint heart.' **17. druid wood.** Show suggestiveness of epithet. **21–32.** The *third* chord. Show connection and meaning as before. **21–24. Earth . . . in.** What does Earth give us, and what is its price? Discuss the three instances, and show why chosen. **25–28. At . . . tasking.** What is 'the devil's booth' as distinguished from 'Earth'? Discuss the instances given. **27. pay.** In what way do we pay our lives? **29–30. 'Tis . . . asking.** What is meant here by 'heaven' and 'God'? **31–32. No . . . comer.** Two transitional lines, introducing the next theme or chord.

33–56. The *fourth* chord. Name the various things which together make up this New England June day, for it is a New England June that the poet is describing. **35. if it be in tune.** Syntax and meaning of this clause? What musical instrument has the poet in mind? **38. murmur . . . glisten.** Give illustrations of the 'murmur' and of the 'glisten.' **39. clod.** In what sense does it climb to a 'soul'? **45. startles,** starts up as if by magic. **46. buttercup.** Why the buttercup, rather than some other flower? **50. like a blossom.** Show in what respects this dainty comparison is true. **54. dumb breast.** Observe the beautiful allusion to the mother instinct in the bird. **56. nice.** Just what does the word mean here? **which song?** What do you think would be the poet's answer to his own question? Why?

57–79. 57–60. **Now . . . bay.** Discuss the figure, showing its aptness. **61. Now . . . it.** Explain. **70. dandelions.** What is the derivation of this word? 67–79. **We . . . crowing.** These lines furnish a good example of what is called " indirect description." **77. bold chanticleer,** often referred to by Lowell. What is the force of the adjective?

80–95. **82. upward striving.** What former lines illustrate this? **83–85. 'Tis . . . living.** What seems to be Lowell's conception of the influence of nature upon man? Compare with Wordsworth in *Tintern Abbey* (107–111). Which is the finer view? **86. Who knows,** and who cares? What is gained by the figure? **90. The . . . youth.** Explain. **91–93. And . . . snow.** Discuss this figure, and compare it with the two which have before brought out the same thought, ll. 57–60 and ll. 86–87. What are the differences, and which is the truer conception? Are our past sorrows really effaced or only covered over? **94–95. What . . . vow.** Observe that the organist has found the chord for which he has been groping; the poet has reached his theme, which he is to develop by means of the story of a dream. Note how these two lines effect a transition which allows the abrupt introduction to Part First.

96–108. What has been the versification of the prelude? What are the rhyme and metre of Part I? In which is there the more irregularity, and what seems to be the effect produced by the irregular lines? **99. Holy Grail:** see introduction to notes. **100–105.** This seeking for a vision before setting out on a quest was not uncommon among knights; but the zest with which the vision is sought marks certain traits of Sir Launfal. What are they? At what time of day does he go to sleep, and is it indoors or outside the castle? **105. Ere day . . . anew.** Discuss the figure. **107. like a cloud.** Show the points of comparison.

109–127. Discuss whether this stanza is (1) a part of Sir Launfal's dream; or (2) a part of his waking consciousness as he gradually falls asleep; or (3) merely a description by the poet, bridging the time from the going to sleep to the beginning of the dream in Stanza III. **109–113. The crows . . . trees.** What time of day is this? **114–115. The castle . . . gray.** In what sense is the castle 'an outpost'? **116. North Countree.** Where may we suppose this to be? Observe the archaic form of 'country' as in the older ballads. What effect does this produce? **122–125. pavilions . . . tent.** What were they?

128–146. **131. flamed so bright.** How does the poet show this brightness? **134. siege.** What suggests the word, and where suggested before? **137. locust-leaf.** What peculiarity of the locust leaf justifies this comparison? Note alliteration and its effect. **138. unscarred,** because a 'maiden knight.' **140–146.** Point out the contrasts in this stanza, and explain how the knight can be so fully in sympathy with the summer, and, at the same time, be the controlling spirit of the gloomy castle. In what is he lacking? **140. hill and stream and tree.** This is a good instance of the poetic value of the specific and definite rather than the general. See note on *Horatius* (23).

147–158. Note the attitude of Sir Launfal toward the leper. He believes himself to be going on a great mission for the glory of God; all nature has seemed propitious; his heart is throbbing with his consciousness of the beauty of the morning and the grandeur of his quest, when suddenly this

loathsome creature spoils it all (as it appears to him) by getting in the way. What evident misconception of the knight as to the real meaning of religion and the service of God? **147. made morn.** Explain. **149. sate**: see note on 'countree' (116). **154. Like a frozen waterfall.** Show the force of this figure. **156. dainty nature.** How do these words explain the character and action of Sir Launfal? **158. So . . . scorn.** Why did he give him anything? Force of 'tossed'?

159–173. Discuss the reasons for the leper's reception of Sir Launfal's gift. **163. which the hand can hold**, modifies what? Why is such not 'true alms'? **164–165.** Is the leper right in condemning giving 'from a sense of duty'? **166. mite.** A coin of exceedingly small value — less than a quarter of a cent. Look up allusion in *Mark* xii. 42. **167. to that**, the preposition means partly, in recognition of that, and partly, because of that. **168–169. That . . . unite.** What is this 'thread' which thus binds the whole world together? **170. The hand . . . alms.** Why not? **171. The heart . . . palms.** Explain. **172. a god goes with it.** Meaning? **store**, abundance. **172. starving**, for want of what? **in darkness**, of what kind?

174–210. Try to conceive a definite picture of this stanza — one in which each detail shall be consistent with the rest. How does a brook freeze, and what is the appearance of the under side of the ice? **174–180. Down . . . bare.** Indicate the means by which the coldness of the wind is emphasized. **175. summers.** Why is '*summers*' more suitable here than *winters?* **176. wold**, here means a rolling, treeless stretch of country. **180. unleafed.** Why is this better than *leafless?* **182. him.** A personal pronoun used for a reflexive. So frequently in poetry. *Cf.* 'me' (162). **183. white stars'.** Why 'white'? **184. groined his arches.** A groin is the angle formed by the intersection of arches. What were the arches in this case? What the beams? What the crystal spars? **186. lashes . . . stars**, the little rays that edge the stars, and seem to dart out as they twinkle. **187. summer delight**: see ll. 205–210. **189–192. Sometimes . . . breeze.** Describe this little forest under the ice. What were the steel-stemmed trees? Why did they bend, and in what direction, *i.e.* up or down stream? What onomatopœia in these lines? **194. mosses.** Was this real moss or an ice formation? **195–196. Sometimes . . . leaf.** What and where was the carving? Why called 'arabesques'? Derivation and meaning of word? **202. a star.** These drops, on the 'nodding' bulrushes, were the stars for the fairy occupants of the winter palace. **204. winter-palace.** Ice-built palaces were constructed first in Russia; now frequently in Canada. **205–210. 'Twas . . . frost.** Discuss this beautiful picture. What might have been some of these images, or 'fleeting shadows'?

211–224. Explain the contrast between this stanza and the last. **212. cheeks of Christmas.** Is this a personification or a metonymy? **214. lightsome.** Does it mean the same here as in l. 137? **215–216. Through . . . tide.** Explain the figure. **217–218. The . . . wind.** Show how the

flame resembles a flag. **219–220. Like . . . blind.** In what sense is the sap 'hunted to death,' what are its 'blind galleries,' and what makes the noise? **221–224. And . . . deer.** Show how the sparks, eddying with the draught through the loose soot in the chimney, are like deer, while the soot is like a forest.

225–239. **225–232. But . . . shelterless.** With what are these lines in contrast? Discuss the figure which they express, showing whether it is attractive, true, effective, and whether it adds to, or detracts from, the poem. **231. burden**, the theme of a musical composition. **232. shelterless.** What is the effect of the repetition? **233. seneschal.** His duties seem to be those of both warden and steward. **flared.** How can a voice be said to flare? **238. piers.** Describe these piers. In what direction do they slant? What is the 'drift' against which they were seen?

240–257. **241. rattled shudderingly.** Show effect of the onomatopœia, and force of the adverb. **243. For . . . spun.** Explain the figure. **244–245. A single . . . sun.** Contrast with ll. 111–112. Why 'cold' sun? **250. hard gate.** Explain the epithet. **251. sate**: see note on l. 116. **252. man.** Syntax? **255. No more . . . cross.** Show the significance of the fact that the cross is no longer ostentatiously displayed. What lesson has Sir Launfal learned? **256. sign**, *i.e.* of the cross. In what sense was it 'the badge of the suffering and the poor'?

258–272. **259. Was . . air.** Explain the figure. **261. sunnier clime,** perhaps in the Holy Land or near it. Observe the comfort and pleasure that Sir Launfal derives from these imaginings, yet how willingly he turns toward the grewsome leper. **265. black and small.** Syntax? **269–272. To where . . . palms.** Show points of appropriateness in the figure.

273–287. **273. For . . . alms.** What is the effectiveness of this sudden interruption? Observe the rhyme, and explain how this adds to the effect of suddenness. **274. may**, as far as Sir Launfal cares. **275–279. But . . . disease.** Show how it suits the poet's purpose to make the leper horrible. **278–279.** Significance of the simile? **280. And.** The force here of this conjunction? Why was *But* not used? **280–285. I behold . . . side**: see *Matthew* xxvii. 29, *Mark* xv. 17, and *John* xx. 25, 27. What points of resemblance does Sir Launfal see between the leper and Christ? **281. tree**, cross. **287. Behold . . . Thee**: see *Matthew* xxv. 40.

288–301. **291. flung an alms.** Force of 'flung'? **leprosie.** What distinction is there between giving to the *leper* and giving to *'leprosie'*? **294. ashes and dust.** What do these symbolize? *Cf.* the phrase "sackcloth and ashes." **295–297. He . . . drink.** Compare his present with his former action. Why does the poet not make Sir Launfal give *all* his crust to the leper? **300. Yet . . . fed.** Explain. **301. with his thirsty soul.** Why is he said to have drunk with his soul? *Cf.* l. 173.

302–327. **302. mused.** On what was Sir Launfal musing, and why with 'downcast face'? **303. A light**, coming from the transfigured leper, who now proves to be the Christ. **307. Beautiful Gate**: see *Acts* iii. 2. **308.**

Himself the Gate : see *John* x. 9. What does this metaphor mean, and what is meant by ' the temple of God in Man ' ? **310–313. His words . . . upon.** Which of the two similes is the more expressive of softness ? of healing power ? **314. calmer than silence.** Can there be anything ' calmer than silence ' ? What is the rhetorical figure ? See INTRODUCTION, § 9. **318. it is here — this cup.** What has made of this wooden cup a holy grail ? What is significant in the fact that it was in Sir Launfal's possession all the while, and was found at the gate of his own castle rather than in distant climes ? Show how this discovery reverts to the " first chord " of the poem, ll. 9–12. **320–322. This crust . . . indeed** : see *Matthew* xvi. 28. Note that Sir Launfal has *more* than found the Grail ; that he is actually partaking in a holy supper. What is now shown to be the true Holy Grail, and where may it be found ? **324–325. Not what . . . bare.** Do these words condemn what we ordinarily term " charity " ? What shall we say of the man who contributes for the help of those with whom he never comes into contact ? Of the man whose wealth is so great that he gives without making any self-sacrifice ? Is *sharing* a necessary condition of true charity ? **326. feeds three.** Explain how the giver feeds Christ and himself as well as the recipient.

328–347. The vision of Sir Launfal is now ended. The quest is proved unnecessary, for the true Grail has been discovered. Discuss the change which this discovery must have brought into the life and ideals of the knight. **328. swound** : *cf. Ancient Mariner* (62). **332. stronger mail.** What is meant ? **334–336. The castle . . . bough.** Discuss the figure. **336. hangbird,** the Baltimore oriole. See *Dict.* under both hangbird and Baltimore oriole. **338–343. The Summer's . . . round** : see ll. 119–127. Describe and account for the change. **346–347. And there's . . . he.** In what sense is this true ? What lessons can you suggest which Sir Launfal may have learned from his vision ? Which lines in the poem seem to you most poetic, and why ? (See INTRODUCTION, § 34.)

IDYLLS OF THE KING

The history of the legends which form the substance of the *Idylls of the King* has already been traced in the text introducing the poems of chivalry. Lack of space prevents the inclusion of more than two of the *Idylls* in this book. The four following general notes will, we trust, clear up for the student most of the difficulties he will encounter.

[Note I.] *The Coming of Arthur*

In this introductory *Idyll* we meet the great king just after he has placed himself upon the throne and founded his new order of knighthood. He has been summoned by a neighboring ruler, Leodogran, the king of Cameliard, to help defend that suffering country against the ravages of the " beast " and the incursions of the Saxon hordes. King Arthur responds to the appeal,

slays the " wild dog, and wolf, and boar, and bear," drives off the heathen invaders, and falls in love with Guinevere, " fairest of all flesh on earth," the daughter of the king. Returning to his own land he finds the country in tumult ; for the " barons of his realm, colleaguing with a score of petty kings," have risen in rebellion against him. With the aid of Sir Lancelot, however, his best loved and most highly honored knight, he completely overthrows the rebels — among them Lot, the husband of Arthur's reputed half-sister, Bellicent. Having thus overcome his foes, Arthur quickly sends " the bold Sir Bedivere, first made of all his knights," to King Leodogran —

> "Saying, 'If I in aught have served thee well,
> Give me thy daughter Guinevere to wife.' "[1]

Before giving answer to the suit, Leodogran seeks to learn the secret of Arthur's birth, for some there were who denied his right to the title of king. Sir Bedivere tells the commonly accepted story of Arthur's parentage, — that he is the son of King Uther and his " winsome wife Ygerne," and half-brother of —

> "Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney, Bellicent,"

who —

> "Hath ever like a loyal sister cleaved
> To Arthur."

Still the old king hesitates. But happily Queen Bellicent herself comes on a visit to Cameliard, bringing with her two of her sons, the light-hearted and sunny-tempered, though irresponsible and somewhat selfish Gawain, and the sullen, suspicious, evil-hearted Modred. In his perplexity Leodogran asks her to reveal what she knows of this suitor for his daughter's hand. Bellicent, responding, describes the impressive scene when Arthur ascended the throne, bound his knights to himself by solemn vows of fealty, and so founded the Order of the Table Round. She tells how the coronation ceremonies were graced by the old mage Merlin ; how they were glorified by the Lady of the Lake (the symbol of Religion or the Church), who " dwells down in the deep," —

> "Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful;"

how near the new-crowned King there stood " three fair queens " (thought to symbolize some such virtues as Faith, Hope, and Charity), —

> "Who stood in silence near his throne, the friends
> Of Arthur, gazing on him, tall, with bright
> Sweet faces, who will help him at his need."

She relates how there was borne before the King the magic sword Excalibur, the sword —

[1] All the passages quoted in Note I are from *The Coming of Arthur*.

"That rose from out the bosom of the lake,
And Arthur rowed across and took it — rich
With jewels, elfin Urim, on the hilt,
Bewildering heart and eye — the blade so bright
That men are blinded by it — on one side,
Graven in the oldest tongue of all this world,
'Take me,' but turn the blade and ye shall see,
And written in the speech ye speak yourself,
'Cast me away!' And sad was Arthur's face
Taking it, but old Merlin counselled him,
'Take thou and strike! the time to cast away
Is yet far-off.' So this great brand the King
Took, and by this will beat his foemen down."

So far Leodogran is partly reassured. Yet he questions still further. Bellicent is "dark in hair and eyes"; but Arthur is "fair" with "blue eyes," and "light and lustrous curls." How, then, can he be her brother? And now it is that the Queen confides to King Leodogran a secret known to no other mortal than herself and Merlin, the aged wizard of King Uther's court. But first she motions to her boys to pass out of the room. —

"And Gawain went, and breaking into song
Sprang out, and followed by his flying hair
Ran like a colt, and leapt at all he saw;
But Modred laid his ear beside the doors,
And there half-heard — the same that afterward
Struck for the throne, and striking found his doom."

Her sons withdrawn, Queen Bellicent tells her secret to the king: how she had been brought up with Arthur and had regarded him as her brother; but how in later days there had been imparted to her the mystery of Arthur's coming into the world. For on the night when King Uther lay on his death-bed, "moaning and wailing for an heir," Merlin, worn out with attending his dying master, —

"Left the still king, and passing forth to breathe,"

walked by the shore and —

"watched the great sea fall
Wave after wave, each mightier than the last,
Till last, a ninth one, gathering half the deep
And full of voices, slowly rose and plunged
Roaring, and all the wave was in a flame:
And down the wave and in the flame was borne
A naked babe, and rode to Merlin's feet,
Who stoopt and caught the babe, and cried, 'The King!
Here is an heir for Uther!' And the fringe
Of that great breaker, sweeping up the strand,
Lashed at the wizard as he spake the word,
And all at once all round him rose in fire,
So that the child and he were clothed in fire.
And presently thereafter followed calm,
Free sky and stars: And this same child,
Is he who reigns."

She had sought to learn more from Merlin, the Queen continues, but —

"He laughed as is his wont, and answered me
In riddling triplets of old time, and said: —

" 'Rain, sun, and rain! and the free blossom blows:
Sun, rain, and sun! and where is he who knows?
From the great deep to the great deep he goes.' "

Thus it came about that old King Leodogran, at last satisfied, and strengthened in his determination by a certain wondrous dream, sends the bold Sir Bedivere —

"Back to the court of Arthur answering yea.

"Then Arthur charged his warrior whom he loved
And honored most, Sir Lancelot, to ride forth
And bring the Queen, and watched him from the gates;
And Lancelot passed away among the flowers —
For then was latter April — and returned
Among the flowers, in May, with Guinevere.
To whom arrived, by Dubric the high saint,
Chief of the church in Britain, and before
The stateliest of her altar-shrines, the King
That morn was married; while in stainless white,
The fair beginners of a nobler time,
And glorying in their vows and him, his knights
Stood round him, and rejoicing in his joy."

This, then, is the story of " the coming " and the marriage of Arthur. Great, good, noble-hearted, he realizes his mighty mission in the world. He knows that Merlin has said : —

"Tho' man may wound him that he will not die,
But pass, again to come; and then or now
Utterly smite the heathen under foot,
Till these and all men hail him for their King."

He sets himself to found a kingdom in accord with his high ideals. Thus far the Romans and the heathen hordes have more than once menaced his new realm, but his heart has told him that —

"The old order changeth, yielding place to new.

"And Arthur and his knighthood for a space
Were all one will, and thro' that strength the King
Drew in the petty princedoms under him,
Fought, and in twelve great battles overcame
The heathen hordes, and made a realm and reigned."

[Note II.] *Persons and Places of the Idylls*

In Note I, the story of *The Coming of Arthur*, we have already called attention to : —

1. **King Arthur,**
2. **Queen Guinevere,**
3. **King Lot of Orkney,**
4. **Queen Bellicent,**
5. **Sir Gawain,**
6. **Sir Modred,**
7. **Sir Lancelot,**
8. **Sir Bedivere,**
9. **King Uther,** Arthur's predecessor,
10. **Merlin,** the magician,
11. **The Lady of the Lake,**
12. **The three fair queens,**
13. **King Leodogran.**

The following is a list of additional names, some knowledge of which is necessary to the understanding of the two *Idylls* included in the text.

1. **Pendragon,** " the dragon's head," a name for Uther, who was accustomed to carry with him a golden dragon to his wars. The name afterward descended to Arthur, the reputed son of Uther. The symbol was suggested by a dragon-like appearance in the heavens, seen at the death of the former king, Aurelius, brother of Uther.

2. **Sir Tristram.** A noble knight, murdered by his uncle, the wicked King Mark of Cornwall. In the *Idylls* he is called Mark's " cousin," but that word is used in its general sense of *kinsman*. Through the power of a magic potion Tristram was made to fall in love with Mark's wife, Iseult.

3. **Sir Geraint.** A brave and noble knight, ever loyal to Arthur, and, finally, killed in his service. He was the husband of Enid, and is the chief character in two of the most charming of the *Idylls*.

4. **Sir Galahad.** A celebrated knight, called " the chaste," who achieved the quest of the Holy Grail. His pure and unselfish nature made him the ideal of chivalry as well as an exemplar of religion.

5. **Sir Percivale.** The first of Arthur's knights to learn the story of the Grail. He is the speaker and principal character in the Idyll of the *Holy Grail*. At last forced to abandon his quest of the Grail, for which by nature he was all unfit, he leaves knighthood and enters upon a monastic life.

6. **Sir Gareth.** Son of Lot and Bellicent, and brother of Gawain and Modred, yet of much finer character than these two knights. He was tall and gracious of form. From his large and shapely hands he derived the name of " Beaumains," or " Fair Hands."

The following are the most important places mentioned in our two *Idylls*.

1. **Lyonnesse.** A fabulous country, formerly adjacent to Cornwall, though it has long since disappeared, and is said to be now hundreds of feet under water.

2. **Camelot.** This city of Arthur's court has been variously located. Tennyson has left the following account : " On the latest limit of the West, in the land of Lyonnesse, where, save the rocky isles of Scilly, all is now wild sea, rose the sacred Mount of Camelot. It rose from the deeps with gardens and bowers and palaces, and at the top of the mount was King Arthur's hall, and the holy minster with the cross of gold. The mount was the most beautiful in the world, sometimes green and fresh in the beam of morning, sometimes all one splendor, folded in the golden mists of the West. But all underneath

was hollow, and the mountain trembled, when all the seas rushed bellowing through the porphyry caves; and there ran a prophecy that the mountain and the city on some wild morning would tumble into the abyss and be no more."

3. **Avilion.** A mythical Isle of the Blessed famed in Celtic story, situated far in the western ocean. In this terrestrial paradise Arthur and other Celtic heroes are supposed to live forever.

4. **Caerleon.** On the river Usk in Wales, one of the most important residences of Arthur and his court.

5. **Caerlyle.** Carlisle in Cumberland, which like Caerleon was frequently the scene of knightly tournaments.

6. **Almesbury.** A convent of the Benedictine nuns, situated in Wiltshire, not far from Salisbury. Thither Guinevere withdrew when her guilty love for Lancelot had been discovered by the king.

7. **Badon hill.** Probably Badbury Hill in Dorsetshire ; the battlefield on which the Britons under Arthur are said to have checked for a time the advance of the West Saxons (about 520 A.D.).

8. **Battlefields of Arthur.** The " twelve great battles " (see end of Note I) in which Arthur overthrew the heathen were, in order of occurrence, at the following places : 1. *Glem* (Lincolnshire or Northumberland); 2, 3, 4, 5. *Duglas* (a small stream in Britain); 6. *Bassa* (a rock in the Firth of Forth); 7. *Celidon* (the Caledonian forest); 8. *Gurnion Castle* (in Norfolk); 9. *Legion* (the city of Exeter); 10. *Trath Treroit* (a river in Lancashire); 11. *Breguoin* (a mountain in Northern England); 12. *Badon* (the place of final victory. See note 7 above).

9. **Astolat.** The home of Elaine. Supposed to be at Guilford in Surrey.

[Note III.] *Time Occupied by the Idylls*

Modified from Maccallum's *Tennyson's Idylls and Arthurian Story.*

The reign of Arthur may be supposed to have lasted twelve years. The order of its events is recorded in the *Idylls* as follows : —

	Idyll.	Chief Events.
1st Year.	I. *The Coming of Arthur.*	Coronation. Founding of Round Table. Crushing of Rebellion. Marriage to Guinevere. Wars with the Heathen and with Rome.
2d Year.	——	First of the Diamond Tournaments.
3d Year.	——	——
4th Year.	——	——
5th Year.	II. 1. *Gareth and Lynette* (?).	Adventures of Gareth. Tristram knighted.
6th Year.	2. *Marriage of Geraint* (?).	Adventures of Geraint.
7th Year.	3. *Geraint and Enid* (?).	"Geraint in the waste land."

	Idyll.	Chief Events.
8th Year.	4. *Balin and Balan* (?).	Love between Lancelot and Guinevere becomes guilty.
9th Year.	5. *Merlin and Vivien* (?).	Betrayal of Merlin by Vivien. (See note, *Eve of St. Agnes*, 171.)
10th Year.	6. *Lancelot and Elaine.*	Last of the Diamond Tournaments.
11th Year.	7. *The Holy Grail.*	Quest of the Grail.
12th Year.	8. *Pelleas and Ettarre.*	Discovery by Arthur of the Queen's unfaithfulness. Tristram slain by Mark.
	9. *The Last Tournament.*	
	(An interval of several weeks.)	
	10. *Guinevere.*	Last interview between Arthur and the Queen.
	III. *The Passing of Arthur.*	Arthur's march, last battle, and passing.

[Note IV.] *Poetical Nature and Form of the Idylls*

There has been much discussion among the critics as to whether the *Idylls of the King* may properly be considered an epic. It is certainly true that this production is not an epic in the sense in which the term is applied to the *Iliad*, or the *Æneid*, or *Paradise Lost*, — poems characterized by continuity of narrative and unity of action. In a certain sense, though carrying out and developing a central theme, Tennyson's *Idylls* form not one poem, but twelve. As a whole, the production has epical quality, and may be characterized as an episodical or idyllic epic. (See Introduction, § 31, 7.)

The metrical form of the *Idylls* is blank verse, — a blank verse finer than anything of its kind since Milton. The lines are not arbitrarily or mechanically formed. With the instinct of a true artist the poet constantly varies the cadence to suit the theme in hand. It will prove an extremely profitable study to examine the metre of many lines and paragraphs, to note the pauses, the substitutions of feet, the sequence of tones, and the harmonic relation between sound and sense. (See Introduction, §§ 20, 1, 2, 4; 21.)

LANCELOT AND ELAINE

1–157. **2. Astolat** : see Note II [1] (*Persons and Places of the Idylls*). **4. sacred shield.** The *Idyll* opens in the middle of the action. Lancelot has left his famous shield in care of the ' lily maid,' and she is guarding it as a sacred trust. This story of Elaine, in her world of dreams and fancies, should be compared with that of the *Lady of Shalott* — Tennyson's first version of this theme. **10. their own tinct**, the *tint* or color of the armorial devices with which the shield was embellished. See blazon in *Dict.* **of her wit**, according to her own fancy. **22, 23. Caerlyle, Caerleon, Camelot** : see Note II. **31. diamond jousts** : see Note III for time of these jousts. **35. Lyonnesse** : see Note II. **36. tarn** : small mountain lake. **46. aside, on**

[1] The reference is to the "general notes" preceding.

each side. 50. **nape**, of the neck. 53. **shingly** : gravelly. **scaur**, a precipitous bank or rock. 69. **Queen**, Guinevere, with whom Lancelot was secretly in love. 76. **this world's hugest.** It is not certain which of Arthur's courts was near London. 91. **tale** : see note on *L'Allegro* (67). 94. **lets**, keeps. 118. **devoir**, devotion. 125. **untruth**, her unfaithfulness to her husband. 134. **The low sun makes the color.** Explain this metaphor and show how it applies to a Lancelot rather than to an Arthur.

158–396. 162. **downs**, tracts of sandy rolling land near the sea. 171. **wordless man.** This character is original with Tennyson. 177–179. **Some . . . them.** Note the naturalness of the picture. 188. **What . . . shield.** His shield, which he has thoughtlessly brought, is known. 201. **Allow him**, excuse his seeming rudeness. 246. **Had marred his face.** In what way may we imagine Lancelot's sin to have left its mark upon him ? 252. **living soul**, with conscience active. 263. **smaller time**, such as the present day. 269. **glanced at**, alluded to. 279. **Badon hill** : see Note II. 287. **Glem.** For this and the proper names of the lines following, see *Battlefields of Arthur*, Note II. 293. **cuirass**, a leather breastplate upon which Arthur had borne in this battle an image of the Virgin Mary. 295. **lightened**, flashed. 297. **white Horse**, the emblem of the Saxons. 338. **rathe** : see note on *Lycidas* (142). 366. **who know**, *i.e.* who know this custom of Lancelot. 382. **twice.** What were they ? 396. **so lived in fantasy** : see l. 27.

397–522. 406–407. **The green light . . . roofs.** The green light from the meadows below were reflected on the chalky ceiling of the cave. 422. **Pendragon** : see Note II. The boy is realizing his life's dream. He has seen 'one' — Lancelot ; he expects, in the tournament, to see the 'other' — Arthur, of mysterious birth. 429. **like a rainbow.** What gave the 'peopled gallery' this appearance ? 434–440. **And from . . . work.** Describe this carving, and explain 'ease' and 'tender.' 442. **nameless king** : see l. 45. 446. **crescent**, in its radical sense from Lat. *crescere*, to increase ; hence growing, as in strength and valor. 447. **overcome**, overtop. 450. **the man**, Arthur. 453. **held the lists**, received the attack. 480. **bare**, bore. Notice the force of the simile which follows. 507. **poplar grove**, near the hermit's cave. See l. 409.

523–739. 535. **Gawain** : see Note I. 547. **carven flower** : see ll. 441–442. 554–555. **Tristram, Geraint, Gareth** : see Note II. 555. **therewithal**, nevertheless. 583–585. **Our . . . glory** : see ll. 151–153. But who spoke these words ? 595. **this**, *i.e.* this is ill news. 653. **hern** : see *Dict.* 707, 713. **courtesy, obedience.** Gawain, the courteous and easy-going, has angered the King. In Arthur's mind 'obedience' and not 'courtesy' is the one true law. 715. **strokes of the blood**, heart beats. 728. **Marred . . . aim**, disconcerted the 'old dame.'

740–981. 771. **I mean nothing.** What *does* he mean ? 800. **casque** : helmet. 844. **twilight**, half light ; thus referring to morning as well as to evening. 857. **simples**, medicinal herbs. 870. **straitened**, restricted, held fast. 877. **one face**, of the queen. 883. **rough sickness** : *cf.* ll. 846–

850. **898. burthen**, as in the phrase "the burden of a song." **923. that . . . yours.** It is due to you that I am alive to hear your request. **953. realm beyond the seas.** Malory says in his *Morte Darthur*: "But to say the sooth, Sir Lancelot and his nephews were lords of all France, and of all the lands that belonged unto France." **969. against me**, against my nature. **977. tact**, sense or feeling.

982–1154. 995. sallow-rifted. Explain. **997. a little song.** The songs in Tennyson's narratives (some of them among his best lyrics) always exquisitely suggest the mood of the story. Compare the songs in *Gareth and Lynette* and in the *Princess*. **1015. Phantom of the house.** The voice of the half-crazed girl, heard at 'the blood-red light of dawn,' is mistaken by the brothers for the "banshee" of the house, — a supernatural being supposed to warn a family of the approaching death of one of its members, by wailing or singing, in a mournful voice, under the windows. **1068. Seeing . . . fault**: see note on *Lady of Shalott* (77). **1092. ghostly man**, priest.

1155–1418. 1158. hard, hardly. Distinguish between these words. **1168. vibrate**, betraying her secret agitation. **1170. oriel**, a sort of bay window. **summer side**, the side most exposed to the sun; *i.e.* the south. **1178. cygnet.** The cygnet, or young swan, is not white, as is the full-grown bird. **1206. your own**, *i.e.* your own worth. **1229. Diamonds to meet them.** Were these reflections in the water, or drops of water splashing up? **1253. girt**, surrounded. **1256, 1257. Sir Percivale, Sir Galahad**: see Note II. **1259–1261. Then came . . . her**: see ll. 1047–1052. **1260. mused**, as in the *Lady of Shalott* (168). **1265. sometime**, once. **1299. Sea was her wrath.** Explain the metaphor. **1316. worship**, credit or honor. **1319. shrine.** Could this be Westminster Abbey, as some critics have suggested? **1346. affiance**, confidence. **1354. homeless**, lonely. **1368. Could bind**, if mere deserving could compel love. **1386. 'Jealousy in love?'** see l. 1340. **1393. Lady of the Lake**: see Note I. **1399. king's son.** Lancelot was the son of Ban, a Celtic king who had aided Arthur in his early wars. **1415. forgotten mere**: see l. 1400. **1418. holy man.** After Arthur's death, Lancelot sought the queen, who had withdrawn to the convent at Almesbury. The repentant Guinevere made him promise to leave her forever; and this he did, retiring to the hermitage "where dwelt the Bishop of Canterbury and the knight, Sir Bedivere." In the words of Malory, Book XVI, ch. v: "God knoweth his thought and his unstableness; and yet shall he die right an holy man."

THE PASSING OF ARTHUR

1–169. The greater part of this poem was published in 1842, under the title of *Morte d'Arthur*. To this early version were afterwards prefixed one hundred and sixty-nine lines, and to the end were added twenty-nine. Thus we have the *Idyll* in its present form, — published as *The Passing of Arthur* in 1869. **1. Sir Bedivere**: see Note I (on the story of *The Coming of Arthur*). **6. their march.** Arthur is marching westward to attack the

traitor Modred, who has leagued himself against the King, with many of Arthur's former knights, and with 'the heathen of the Northern Sea.' **9. Him**, God. Explain Arthur's mood of hopelessness, despair, almost of doubt. **18. Or else.** In what ways does Arthur try to account for God's apparent desertion of him? **26. reels back into the beast**, lapsing into the barbarism from which he had raised it. **28. Nay . . . die** : see Note I. **30. Gawain** : see Note I. **31. Lancelot's war.** After the discovery of Lancelot's treachery, the King made war against him. Gawain, aiding Arthur, received a mortal wound at the hands of Lancelot. **35. isle of rest** : see Avilion, in Note II. **56. Light was Gawain in life.** For Sir Gawain's character, see Note I, and *Lancelot and Elaine*, l. 552, and following. **59. Modred** : see Note I, and note to l. 6, above. **68–69. And brake . . . wall** : see Note I. **77. One . . . Almesbury** : see Note II. The reference is to Guinevere, —

> "And while she grovelled at his feet,
> She felt the King's breath wander o'er her neck,
> And in the darkness o'er her fallen head
> Perceived the waving of his hands that blest."
> *Guinevere* (577–580).

81. Lyonnesse : see Note II. **90–91. that day . . . year.** What day must this have been? **117. voices of the dead.** Explain. The description of this battle is weird but splendid. Contrast with the picture of the silent battlefield in the lines following. **135. voice**, the sound of the ocean; referred to again in ll. 139–141. **148. so**, if. **160. purport**, the ideals for which it has existed. **161. quick**, as in the Biblical expression, "the quick and the dead." See *Dict.* **168. Excalibur** : see Note I.

170–440. These were the lines which originally formed the poem *Morte d'Arthur*. **177. chancel** : see *Dict.* **180. a great water.** What was this? **182. unsolders**, breaks apart. **189. Camelot** : see Note II. **191. Merlin** : see Note I. **198, 199. Rose . . . lake, Clothed . . . wonderful** : see these lines in Note I. **206. lightly**, quickly. **224. haft** : see *Dict.* Also see description of this brand in Note I. **228. This . . . mind**, a line taken from the *Æneid*. **248. lief**, beloved. **262. obedience . . . rule** : see note on *Lancelot and Elaine* (707, 713). Why was Bedivere so loath to throw the sword away? **272. maiden of the Lake** : see Note I. **284–285. I heard . . . reeds** : *cf.* ll. 238–239. These repetitions are similar to those found in the epics of Homer. Malory uses them as well as Tennyson. **289. Authority . . . king**, *i.e.* the king loses his authority. **307. northern morn**, the Aurora Borealis. **308. isles of winter**, icebergs. **312. Clothed . . . wonderful** : *cf.* l. 199 and note. **337. blue eyes** : see Note I. **350. Clothed . . . breath**, the vapor of his breath, condensed in the cold air. **366. Three Queens** : see ll. 452–456; also Note I. **377. casque** : helmet. **383. greaves and cuisses** : see *Dict.* **384. light and lustrous curls** : see Note I. **401. Holy Elders**, the three "wise men of the East." See *Matthew* ii. 1–12.

403. image . . . world. According to Malory, the Round Table was intended to typify "the roundness of the world." **408. The old . . . new:** see this line in Note I. **427. Avilion:** see Note II. **434–435. swan . . . carol:** see note on *Rape of the Lock* (262–263).

441–469. These lines were added for the volume of 1870 as a conclusion to the *Idylls*. **445. From . . . goes:** see this line in Merlin's 'riddling triplets,' Note I. **469. And . . . year.** Notice the quiet ending, producing the effect, "all passion spent," suitable to the close of the epic poem.

ROSSETTI

THE BLESSED DAMOZEL.[1] Rossetti was early impressed with Poe's *The Raven* (first published in the New York *Evening Mirror*, January 29, 1845). "I saw," he said years later, "that Poe had done the utmost it was possible to do with the grief of the lover on earth, and so I determined to reverse the conditions, and give utterance to the yearning of the loved one in heaven." The result, written before the poet's nineteenth birthday, was *The Blessed Damozel*, his best known and most typical poem. It was printed originally in the second number (February, 1850) of *The Germ*, the short-lived journal of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (see the account in our text, pp. 422–424); but in successive editions many changes were made, for Rossetti was a fastidious writer, always reluctant to put aside the file. — The poem reads like a dreamy improvisation, and with its enchanting harmonies, its pellucid diction, its sensuous mystery, pictorial magnificence, and medieval setting it is a beautiful symbol of romance at its best. "Of the true romantic feeling, the ever-present apprehension of the spiritual world and of the struggle of the soul with earthly conditions . . ., Rossetti's poetry is as full as his pictures." With this poem should be read, as belonging to the same land of dreams, Coleridge's *Christabel* and *Kubla Khan*, Keats's *La Belle Dame sans Merci* and *Eve of St. Agnes*, and Poe's *Ulalume* and *The Raven*.

The poem is a vision of a maiden in heaven (hence, the Blessed Damozel), of her longing for him whom she loves, who is yet on the earth, and of her anticipation of their meeting in "the deep wells of light . . . there in God's sight." The lover, imaginatively, tells the vision, and his comments are placed in parentheses. **1. damozel.** Archaic for damsel; derived, through the French, demoiselle, from *dominicella*, the diminutive of *domina* (*cf.* *domus*, house), a lady; *cf.* dame. **2. the gold bar of Heaven.** The bar along the rampart of God's house (l. 25; *cf.* l. 142). The picture of her abode is in the same romantic spirit as ll. 69–70 of Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale*: "Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn," but it has also, as has the entire poem, a reminiscence of Dante's *Paradiso*. **5–6.** Why three? why seven? **10. meetly,** fitly,

[1] For the remaining poems of this book only comparatively brief notes are necessary. Still further to save space, the title of each of these remaining poems will be found as here printed, instead of being given a separate line as heretofore.

befittingly. Note the poetic superiority of meetly. Explain. **24. sets apace,** fast declines. **28.** The depth which is the beginning of Space. **34. ridge.** A good example of poetic vision. Can you see the picture? **36. midge,** gnat. **76. wells of light,** wells of heavenly radiance. **86–87.** The 'mystic tree' seems to be a reference to the tree of life in the Garden of Eden; the Dove is the symbol of the Holy Ghost. **97–102.** This stanza, with its beautiful tribute from the lover to the Blessed Damozel, appeared first in the text published after the death of Rossetti's wife. **107–108.** Saintsbury speaks of these verses as "consummate triumphs of the word-music brought by Tennyson into English poetry. Indeed this couplet of names might be made a sort of text to expound the great appeal to the ear of this kind of poetry, which any one who is deaf to the exceptional and golden harmony of the arrangement need never hope to appreciate." Try the effect of rearranging the names. **114.** *Cf. Adonais* (ll. 1–19). **126. citherns and citoles.** See *Dict.*

Note the ballad-quality of the stanza in which the poem is cast; *cf.* the six-line stanzas of *The Ancient Mariner* and remarks thereon in introduction to notes on Coleridge. **37–40.** These lines appeared for the first time in the edition published after the death of the poet's wife. **44. circling charm.** Referring to the "lovers, newly met." **45–48.** Some critics have objected to these and other details of sensuous description; others defend them as not only appropriate to the conception but exquisite and tender. What is your opinion? **53–54.** Referring to the Pythagorean fancy that the movement of the heavenly bodies produces a music imperceptible to human ears. Her voice, the passage means, was as sweet as this music. **55–57.** Another example of poetic vision; so also, above, ll. 41–42. **61–66.** Is not her voice heard in all beautiful sounds? *Cf. Adonais* (ll. 28–30). **66. stair.** Probably the musical notes as they drop from the bell-tower, forming, as it were, an echoing stair. **73. aureole.** Here, as in early pictures, a gold disk surrounding the head and worn by those who have won the victory over the world, the flesh, or the devil. It represents the glory emanating from the redeemed spirit.

MORRIS

The Earthly Paradise, a masterpiece in three volumes (1868–1870), "is a series of twenty-four tales in verse, two for each month of the year. They are bound together, in imitation of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, by a connecting link which forms the subject of the prologue." According to the prologue, not reproduced in the present volume, "a company of wanderers driven from their Scandinavian home by the great pestilence which overspread Europe in the fourteenth century, after long journeys in search of the fabled earthly paradise, come 'shrivelled, bent, and grey,' to a nameless city in a distant sea, where Hellenic civilization and culture have been preserved. Here they find rest and hospitality, and twice a month they and their hosts meet at a solemn feast, at which a story is related. Twelve of

the stories, told by elders of the city, come from classical sources ; the other twelve [of which *The Writing on the Image* is one], told by the wanderers, are derived chiefly from medieval Latin, French, and Icelandic originals, with gleanings from Mandeville and the Arabian Nights" (*Cambridge Hist. Engl. Lit.*, XIII, 138). We have given in the text the *Apology* with which Morris opens his *Earthly Paradise*, and the tenth story of the series.

An Apology. State the substance of this modest apology and then explain the significance of the title *The Earthly Paradise*. What in your opinion is the value to the world of such a purpose and such a work as are mentioned here ? Morris's beautiful poem, *The Message of the March Wind*, suggests an answer to this question. **7. The idle singer of an empty day.** Meaning of idle, empty ? **22–23.** Do you think the sentiment unmanly ? Do you suppose that, after all, such 'idle singing' as this of *The Earthly Paradise* may very definitely help 'to set the crooked straight' ? This description of himself is by no means accurate : it is simply an overstatement of the great sympathy he had for beauty in romance. As a matter of fact he tried to set the crooked straight in more ways than one. He was a reformer of decorative arts and English taste in regard to them, and he was one of the most reasonable and devoted socialists of his day. **24. my murmuring rhyme.** Why is this an appropriate way of speaking of the verse of the *Apology* and the next selection ? What, do you gather, is the author's estimate of the poetic quality of his work ? See the following lines. **25. ivory gate.** Whence issue dreams that delude mortals. See *Cl. M.*, p. 54. In what sense is the allusion to be understood ? *Cf.* 'shadowy isle' (38). **26. importunate.** See *Dict.* **27. sleepy region.** Interpret. **29–35.** The comparison makes clearer what the poet has already said. **39. steely,** cold, without compassion. In reference, by metonymy, to the world of commerce and industry ? **41. Whose ravening monsters.** The iniquities of modern life must be 'slain' by mightier men than 'the poor singer of an empty day.' — The stanza in which the *Apology* is written — the Chaucerian seven-line stanza or rhyme royal — was much affected by Morris. See Introduction, § 24, 4; for Metrical Romance, § 31, 4.

The Writing on the Image. *The Writing on the Image* is an example of Morris's virile, rapid, almost breathless style of narrative. It does not, however, give one an adequate idea of the worship of the beauty of form, color, and tone that is evident in most of the romances. The interest in medievalism is of course manifest. It has been said of Morris that "his poetry deals, it is true, with the human passions, but the emotion is always seen as in a picture." Do you find in this poem any justification of this criticism ? **4. cornel wood.** A hardwood tree. **46. mocked.** Modifies 'he' (44). **80. marl,** clayey soil. **95.** See above, l. 44. **105. look,** expect. **143. nothing knew,** he did not know at all. **199. meet,** fit. **244. recked of,** took account of. **267. Wage,** pay. An obsolete use ; also provincial in England. **274. stack.** An obsolete past tense of 'stick.'

SWINBURNE

THE MAKING OF MAN. Our selection, to which we have given its present title, is the second choral song in the drama *Atalanta in Calydon* (1865). This tragedy, written after the model of ancient Greek tragedy, pervaded by a fatalism even more desperate than that of its models, and cast in "a new kind of blank verse, which had the classical dignity with a romantic exuberance of sound and color," was the poem that first made Swinburne famous. The original story, illustrated by extracts from Swinburne's *Atalanta*, may be found in *Cl. M.*, pp. 237–241. This chorus describes the tragic complexity of man's nature and existence. Note the line of three accents, iambic-anapæstic in movement, varied by truncated lines and hypercatalectic endings (see INTRODUCTION, § 20, 1, 4). One can easily realize that in comparison with previous poems in this book Swinburne's music has something new, — a luxurious sonority, a sensuously intricate melody, along with a constant temptation to elevate pleasurable sound above meaning. 1–3. Since it is man who reckons time by years, Time comes to the *birth* of man before the *beginning* of years. **man**, mankind. Why 'a gift of tears'? **4. glass that ran.** This may refer to her glass of sorrows — so full that it overflowed; or to an hour-glass, which marks the passing of all things, even sorrows. **5. leaven.** How is pain pleasure's leaven? Note the tragic contrasts in this and the following lines. **34.** In what sense are eyesight and speech the 'veils of the soul'? **35, 36. time, time.** Objects of wrought, l. 33. **38. space**, a measure of time.

THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE. Published in *Poems and Ballads*, 1866. This poem, probably the best known of Swinburne's shorter pieces, must not be thought of as an attempt to present or justify an idea or a philosophy of life. It is, instead, the expression of a mood, — the mood that envelops us when the body grows tired and the spirit weak from too much grappling with problems or 'too much love of living,' and the mind is "half in love with easeful Death," calling him "soft names in many a musèd rhyme." It is the mood that longs for forgetfulness, to drink of Lethe and eat of the lotus. In the first stanza the poet creates for this mood a place where the world's troubles seem not to reach save as 'spent waves' riot.' Then, gathering all the epithets of physical weariness and spiritual lassitude, he elaborates his Garden of Proserpine from the classical myth of the meads of Asphodel, "studded with futile bushes and pale-flowered weeds, where wander the shades" (see *Cl. M.*, p. 49). By insensible degrees, by the entrancing music of his cadences and luscious repetition of double rhymes and subtle assonances within the line, he deepens the soothing effect of languorous quiet and aimless dreaming until the wan lips of Proserpine seem sweeter than love's and the tired heart sinks with a sigh of relief into 'sleep eternal In an eternal night.' — For a poem of similar mood, see Tennyson's *The Lotus Eaters;* for a different interpretation of Proserpine see G. E. Woodberry's *Proserpine* (quoted in part in *Cl. M.*, pp. 163–164); for the attributes and

myth of Proserpine see *Cl. Dict.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 44, 53, 159–164 ; for the Greek underworld of shadows, where buds are barren and nothing comes to fruit, *Cl. M.*, pp. 47–50. The natural and healthy contrast to the mood of this poem is found in Browning's optimism and praise of heroic action, or in Meredith's faith in a beneficent plan of life, sufficient, as he thinks, to the universal purpose of the Master-Mind even if man be not assured of a future existence.

Swinburne's unexcelled power of rhythmic composition is well illustrated in these verses, and since the object here is the depicting of a mood rather than the development of an idea the poem does not suffer from the defect of Swinburne's excellence, a slighting of thought for melody, cadence, and harmony. Of the effect of the rhymes and the repetition and echo of sounds within the line we have already spoken ; of the use of liquids and other soft and prolonged consonants, of the languid sequence of the vowels (see INTRODUCTION, §§ **21**, 1, 3 ; **23**, 2, 3), the student can easily and pleasurably inform himself. The pleasure of such study will be enhanced by comparing the art of rhythm and sound in this poem with that of Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale*, Coleridge's *Kubla Khan*, or Rossetti's *The Blessed Damozel*.

DOBSON

"GOOD-NIGHT, BABETTE !" From *Proverbs in Porcelain*. This little scene, with its piercing pathos of irrecoverable youth, is one of six similar pieces, each of which is an interpretation of a group in Sèvres porcelain, — as to "why and how The fragile figures smile and bow." **Si vieillesse pouvait** ! If old age could only bring it all back again ! **6.** Babette had gone to drop her *immortelle* on the grave of Ma'am'selle Rose. **20. chansonnette**, a little song. **21. Angelus.** The bell, — tolled morning, noon, and evening to indicate when the devotion is to be recited in memory of the Anunciation to the Virgin Mary, "*Angelus* Domini nuntiavit Mariae" (The angel of the Lord announced to Mary). **35. the love I lost**, Rose. **38. "the sky so blue."** *Cf.* l. 10.

THE CHILD-MUSICIAN. From *Vignettes in Rhyme*. "These verses originated in an 'American story' told me orally by a friend who had found it copied into some English paper. I 'romanced' it after my own fashion. . . . Those who wish to read the true and authentic story of poor little James Speaight must do so in the pathetic prose setting of Mr. Thomas Bailey Aldrich" (Mr. Dobson's Note).

Essays in Old French Forms. For Mr. Dobson's introduction of these forms into English verse see the introduction to the selections, p. 453; for definition and analysis of these forms see INTRODUCTION, § **28**, 1–4.

ROSE CROSSED THE ROAD. Mr. Dobson's title for this triolet, *Urceus Exit*, alludes to an epigram in Horace's *Art of Poetry*, l. 22, "I intended a wine-jar but it turned out a pitcher." This is the fifth and last in a little series of triolets under the general title *Rose-Leaves*.

THE WANDERER. **13. repelling.** Modifies 'arms.' **17. over-spelling,** going over it all again in memory.

WITH PIPE AND FLUTE. Dedicated to Mr. Edmund Gosse, in reference, apparently, to his volume of verses, *On Viol and Flute* (1873). **22. Pan.** See *Cl. Dict.*, or *Cl. M.*, pp. 45, 181–185. **28. Arcady,** Arcadia. A mountainous region in Greece proverbial for its rural simplicity; the ideal pastoral Arcadia of the poets was not known to the Greek pastoral poets, but seems to have been a modern invention, some say of the Italian, Sannazaro (d. 1530), who wrote a prose pastoral called *Arcadia*. **32. Beersheba unto Dan.** From one end of the land to the other: the whole extent of Palestine from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south (see I *Sam.* iii. 20, etc.). **33. Apollo's self,** not to speak of the rustic Pan, who was very much Apollo's inferior as a musician (see *Cl. M.*, pp. 110–111). **34. night-jar.** A bird, also called the goatsucker, with a very disagreeable song.

FOR A COPY OF THEOCRITUS. For the great pastoral and idyllic poet, Theocritus, a Greek of Sicily and Alexandria, who flourished in the third century B.C., see *Encyc. Brit.* For selections from his Idylls and Pastorals see *Cl. M.*, pp. 198–200, 222, 223, 224. **37. fold,** sheepfold. **39. Age of Gold.** See *Cl. M.*, pp. 10, 11, 59, 366.— For another tribute to Theocritus see Andrew Lang's *Ballade to Theocritus in Winter*.

LANG

BALLADE OF MIDDLE AGE. From *Rhymes à la Mode*. For French forms of versification see INTRODUCTION, **§ 28**, and under Dobson, above. **3, 4. threnodies, elegiacs.** See *Dict.* **22. wot,** know (first person singular indicative present of 'wit'). **25. *O nate mecum.*** O thou who wert born with me, *i.e.* my contemporary (from Horace's Ode to Corvinus: *Odes*, III, 21).

BRIDGES

I HAVE LOVED FLOWERS THAT FADE. **1–8.** The beauty of flowers. **4. unmemoried scents.** Scents that cannot be recalled.

9–16. The beauty of music. **9. airs,** musical airs, that cease almost before they are projected into the air.

17–24. The mission of song. **22. 'Twas thine.** 'Twas thy part.

I LOVE ALL BEAUTEOUS THINGS. **3.** To love beautiful things is one of the best ways of praising God. Man deserves honor for his love of beauty, and he wins joy, brief though it be, in the making of beautiful things that others may love.

LAUS DEO. Let "praise to God" consecrate thy work. **4. that . . . nought.** In apposition with 'thought,' l. 3.

WEEP NOT TO-DAY. **2. in present fears,** amid the fears that beset you now. **13–16.** Fight now and always that death may find you brave. Death is not far away nor unexpected. That day will be just as much a

' to-day ' to you as is the " to-day " of your present grief : only there will be no " to-morrow."

HENLEY

I AM THE CAPTAIN OF MY SOUL. This poem, from *Echoes*, is dedicated In Memoriam, R. T. Hamilton Bruce (1846–1899), but the date of composition is given as 1875 and Professor Saintsbury says it is " the portrait of Stevenson."

DAVIDSON

GOD IS AN ARTIST, NOT AN ARTISAN. This is a selection from *Queen Elizabeth's Day*, in the *Fleet Street Eclogues*. **18. plasm**, the physical basis of life. **motes**, small particles of matter. **30. battened**, fed gluttonously.

THE UNKNOWN. From *The Last Ballad*. **16–18.** This and only this can even up the odds that are against us in life, *viz.*, ' To brave and to know the unknown,' and that effort is both motive and goal of all noble existence. **19. strewn**, rhyming perfectly with 'unknown.' See pronunciation in *Dict.*

WATSON

WORDSWORTH'S GRAVE. For list of other elegies in this book, see top p. 670. **1. The old rude church.** Wordsworth was buried in the churchyard at Grasmere, on the banks of the Rotha, or Rothay. **2. high-born.** The Rothay rises in the mountains to the north of Grasmere. **13.** The line suggests the medieval supernaturalism beloved of the Pre-Raphaelites and earlier romantic poets. **17–20.** Suggestive of what lines in *Tintern Abbey* and the *Ode on Immortality?* **29–32.** The significance, appropriateness, of each adjective ? Watson does not choose his epithets merely for their sound or color, but for their truth. This gives depth to his style. **36.** The keynote of Mr. Watson's interpretation of Wordsworth's poetry. **41. Lethe**, the river of oblivion. See *Cl. M.*, p. 51. **46. frenzied**, inspired. **59–60.** An allusion to Wordsworth's simple subjects and natural diction (see above, the Introduction to his poems).

65–120. On eighteenth-century poetry, *cf.* above, the introduction to Chap. VI : THE CLASSICAL OR CONVENTIONAL SCHOOL. **66–67.** Referring to the poetry of the Elizabethan age. **68. a modish dress to charm the Town.** A fashionable style, conventional and artificial, to please the society wits of London : the style of Pope and his followers. **89. rugged scholar-sage.** Samuel Johnson. The allusion is to passages in Johnson's *London*, *Vanity of Human Wishes*, *Letter to Lord Chesterfield*, etc. **95. Collins.** William Collins (1721–1759), whose lyrics, like those of Gray (*cf.* l. 96), are a note of grace and beauty in the midst of the conventional rhetoric of the age. **96. the frugal note of Gray.** *Cf.* above, Chap. VI. **99–100.** Alluding to Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*. **101–110.** Burns. **110–120.** Cole-

ridge and Wordsworth. **117. Rydal Mere.** From Grasmere Wordsworth moved to Rydal Mount ; *cf.* above, Chap. VII.

121–188. 127–128. Perhaps Swinburne, and Browning. **129. idly tuneful.** Does he mean Morris? 133–134. Possibly alluding to the writers in French forms of verse. 149–150. Byron. 151 ff. Wordsworth. 161–164. Stock settings in romantic poetry. **173. Helm Crag, Silver Howe.** Mountains in the lake region of Westmoreland.

KIPLING

MANDALAY. From *Barrack-Room Ballads*. In this poem and the next the "Tommy Atkins" or British soldier of the regular army uses the London cockney dialect — dropping his *h*'s, the *d* from "and," the *f* from "of," and the *g* from "ing." 1–10. **Burma**, an ancient kingdom, now part of the British Empire, lies northeast of the Bay of Bengal. **Mandalay** is its capital, and **Moulmein** one of its seaports. **Rangoon** is the principal town in Lower Burma. **12. Theebaw**, the last king of Burma, deposed by the British in 1885. **15. bloomin'**, slang for full-blown, absolute. **16. Budd**, Buddha. **22–23. hathis**, Hindu for elephants. **teak**, a dark, durable wood. **28. the Bank**, of England, in London. **37. Chelsea**, a suburb, and the **Strand**, a main thoroughfare, of London. **39. grubby**, colloquial for dirty as from scratching up the earth with the hands. **43. Suez**, a seaport of Egypt, on the northwestern arm of the Red Sea.

GUNGA DIN. From *Barrack-Room Ballads*. 2–3. When you are in comfortable quarters at the military camp at Aldershot, near London, and engage only in the sham fighting of manœuvres. 6. You'll lick his very boots, humiliating as that may be. **12. bhisti**, Anglo-Indian for water-carrier. 15–16. Slide here quick ; bring water swiftly. **27. Harry By**, O brother ! **32. juldee**, hurry. **33. marrow**, hit. **35. dot an' carry one** : *i.e.* his limping gait. **41. mussick**, water-bag of skin. **70. dooli**, a litter for the wounded. **82. Lazarushian-leather**, slang. The word is made by telescoping "Lazarus" (the kindly beggar) with "Russian leather" (the color of Gunga Din).

IF. From *Rewards and Fairies*, 1910 ; *Inclusive Edition*, 1919. 17–20. Not gambling for money, but putting all that you are into some good cause and, if you fail, taking your defeat bravely and starting all over again. 29. Kipling's creed of work. The minute will never forgive you if you fail to devote its fulness to the Lord. Such shirking stands an offence to all eternity.

WHEN LIFE'S LAST PICTURE IS PAINTED. *L'Envoi* to *The Seven Seas*.

RECESSIONAL. From *The Five Nations*. Written for the Diamond Jubilee, beginning June 22, 1897, in celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of Queen Victoria's accession to the throne. 4. **palm and pine** : by metonymy for south and north. 7. The verb in the singular, because the nouns present a collective idea. **14. dune**, a ridge of loose sand on the

coast. 16. The Assyrian empire, which had been in existence more than twelve centuries, fell with the fall of **Nineveh** in 608 B.C. **Tyre**, the most queenly of Phœnician cities for six centuries, never recovered its prestige after its capture by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C. 26. The barrel of the gun and the murderous fragments of the bomb-shell.

For All We Have and Are. From *The Years Between*. Written in 1914, when Britain declared war upon Germany.

YEATS

Innisfree. An islet off County Mayo on the west coast of Ireland. **Dooney, Kilvarnet**, etc. On the west coast of Ireland. **Mavrone**, my poor dear; here in the sense of *alas!* — Pronounce Yeats, *Yāts*.

PHILLIPS

Marpessa. For the story see *Cl. Dict.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 115–116.

DE LA MARE

Nicholas Nye. 1. **darnel**, a wheat-field weed. **dock**, a coarse weed. 2. **may**. The hawthorn; from the month in which it blooms. 7. **lone**, loneliness. 15. **turn to his head**, turn his head to, or round, as if to speak to himself or to the little boy.

The Truants. The truant, or the child stolen away by magic, would seem to be each man's lost childhood, — the child he once was; or may not the truants be the children grown up whom Time has stolen from their parents?

MASEFIELD

A Consecration. Prefixed to *Salt-water Ballads* (1902), the poems of which were written during boyhood and youth. 9. **koppie**, Anglo-African for a hillock. 13. **clout**, rag or cloth for cleaning. 14. **chantyman**. The chanty is "a song sung to lighten labor at the capstan sheets, and halliards. The soloist is known as the chanty-man, and is usually a person of some authority in the fo'c's'le" (Mr. Masefield's note, as are also the quoted notes under *Dauber*). **halliards**. Ropes by which sails are hoisted.

Dauber. *The Story of a Round House* (1912). This noble poem of some two thousand lines should be read in full. Our selections offer but an outline of the story and a glimpse of the beauty that invests it. 7. **idlers**. "The members of the round-house mess, generally consisting of the carpenter, cook, sailmaker, boatswain, painter, etc., are known as the idlers." **abaft the galley**, behind the ship's kitchen. 11. **bouilli**, preserved meat. 12. **dungarees**, "thin blue or khaki-colored overalls made from cocoanut fibre." 15. **Si**, one of the apprentices. 18. **Z**. English pronunciation,

Zed. **20. skysails**, the uppermost square sails. **Trade**. Trade-wind, *i.e.* a wind blowing continually in the same direction — hence useful to navigators or 'trade'; see *Dict.* **27. yard**, see note on l. 116. **33. half-decks**, "cabins or apartments in which the apprentices are berthed." **34. fo'c's'le**. This is the sailors' pronunciation of 'forecastle,' the cabin or cabins in which the men are berthed. **47. clipper**, "a title of honor given to ships of more than usual speed and beauty." **61. Eight bells**: struck on shipboard every four hours — at 4, 8, and 12 o'clock, when one "watch" ends and another begins. What hour does this seem to have been? **72. Trades**. See note on l. 20. **91. dungarees**. See note on l. 12. **98. reefers**, apprentices. **112. Sails**, the sailmaker. **shackles**, rope handles for a sea-chest. **pointing**, "a kind of neat plait with which ropes are sometimes ended off or decorated." **115. spit brown**, chew tobacco. **116. crojick**, or crossjack, "a square sail set upon the lower yard of the mizen mast." **braces**, "ropes by which the yards are inclined forward or aft." Yards are "steel or wooden spars (placed across masts) from which square sails are set." **124. Chips**, the carpenter. **147. Bosun**, sailors' pronounciation of 'boatswain.'. See *Dict.* **175. Shifting suits**, changing sails. **185. yards**. See note on l. 116. **191. sheet**, a rope or chain for extending the lower corner of a square sail. **clew**, *i.e.* clew-line, a rope for lifting the lower corner of a square sail. **start**, slack off a little. **192. royals**, light upper square sails. **216. Mizen top-gallants**. The mizzentop-gallant sail is the third sail from the top on the aftermost mast. For this and other technical terms of a ship's rigging see the illustration under 'ship' in *Century Dict.* **218. slatted**. Referring to the noise of sails flogging in the wind. **223. ringbolt**, a metallic bolt with an eye to which is fitted a ring. **250. topsail yards**. The topsails are the second and third sails from the deck. **255. sheet**. See note on l. 191. **259. soldier**. A colloquialism for one who pretends to work but is really of little or no use. **275. sheet-blocks**, "iron blocks, by means of which sails are sheeted home." **301. half-deck**. See note on l. 33.

CARGOES. From *The Story of a Round House*. "One of the most beautiful modern poems made out of a symbol is *Cargoes* by John Masefield. Only one symbol is used — the cargo. But in terms of that symbol, and in three short stanzas, Mr. Masefield describes commerce in three great periods of the world's history. And he contrives to give us a sense of the world's growth in democracy without saying a word about it" (Marguerite Wilkinson, *New Voices*, p. 96).

NOYES

THE BARREL-ORGAN. **2. the City**. The commercial centre of London is known as the 'City.' **4. fulfilled**, completed. **8. Symphony**. The rhythm of life. The simple, imperfect music of the barrel-organ is so enriched and perfected in the human emotions it stirs that it does indeed bear

its part in the eternal symphony of life. *Cf.* the fuller statement of the i in ll. 104–107, 129–138, below. **17.** The changes of the music of the bar organ are reflected in the lyric changes of the poem, as here, and below ll. 33, 53, 109, 121, 129, 139, 155. **18. prismatic.** See *Dict.*, prism. N the extension of the figure in ll. 19–24 and discuss its propriety. W 'Dissects' (21)? **25. *La Traviata*.** Verdi's pathetic opera, founded on well-known play by Alexandre Dumas, *La Dame aux Camelias*. **27 *Trovatore*.** A tragic opera by Verdi. **32. a dance.** The music char to a dance tune, reflected in the tripping measures of ll. 33–52. **33. K** At Kew, a suburb of London, are the beautiful Botanic Gardens. **Dorian nightingale.** Dorian, in reference to the Dorian story of Philom See *Cl. Dict.* or *Cl. M.*, pp. 249, 250. **58. poppies.** Symbolic of the l of dead dreams, l. 59. **59. dead dreams.** Dreams of the past. **60. Ve** Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901), the most popular of Italian operatic compos **63. Piccadilly.** A famous thoroughfare in London — a sort of Fifth Ave — so named from the picardils or piccadills, small stiff collars, affected the gallants of the time of James I. **65. *A che la morte*,** passionate s of lost love in *Il Trovatore*. **74. modish,** stylish. **83–87.** Referring rowing-matches on the Isis, *i.e.* the upper course of the Thames. **demi-rep,** a woman of doubtful reputation. **109–128. So it's Jerem** The music changes from the pathos of the dead dreams to the gayety true love coming.

The Admiral's Ghost. Horatio Nelson (1758–1805), the great Eng admiral, defeated the French fleet off Cape Trafalgar, Oct. 21, 1805, t destroying Napoleon's hope of invading England. He had lost his ri arm and his right eye in earlier service. T. M. Hardy, who was Nels flag-captain at Trafalgar, was walking the deck of the "Victory" with admiral when the latter received his death wound. — Sir Francis Dr (*c.* 1545–1595), the first English commander to see the Pacific Ocean to circumnavigate the globe, worsted the Spanish in many naval batt and as vice-admiral shared in the victory over the Spanish Armada (15 He was a Devonshire man, as suggested in the poem. He died aboard ship, at Nombre de Dios Bay in the West Indies, during an expedi against the Spaniards.

STEPHENS

The Lonely God. From *The Hill of Vision* (Maunsel, 1912).

From the Adventures of Seumas Beg. For the rest of these cha ing poems see Mr. Stephens's *The Rocky Road to Dublin : The Advent of Seumas Beg* (The Macmillan Co., 1915). Seumas, pronounced *Shā-m*

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